

INSIDE TODAY

U.S. NEWS

Iraq: Plot to bomb U.S.,

European countries revealed

LARA JAKES QASSIMABDUL-ZAHRA Associated Press BAGHDAD (AP) —

Iraqi authorities have obtained confessions from captured insurgents who claim al-Qaida is planning suicide attacks in the United States and Europe during the Christmas season, two senior officials said Wednesday. A senior U.S. intelligence official confirmed the threat as credible. Iraqi Interior Minister Jawad al-Bolani told The Associated Press that the botched bombing in central Stockholm last weekend was among the alleged plots the insurgents revealed. Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari, in a telephone interview from New York, called the claims “a critical threat.” Both al-Bolani and Zebari said Iraq has informed Interpol of the alleged plots, and alerted authorities in the U.S. and European countries of the possible danger. Neither official specified which country or countries in Europe are alleged targets.

Cont. on page A15

UN Security Council lifts key sanctions against Iraq

Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari speaks to reporters after a United Nations Security Council meeting, at U.N. headquarters, Wednesday, Dec. 15, 2010.

Associated Press



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This image released by Time Magazine, Wednesday, Dec. 15, 2010, shows the cover for Time magazine's 2010 “Person of the Year” issue, featuring Facebook founder and CEO Mark Zuckerberg.

Associated Press

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Mark Zuckerberg named Time 'Person of Year'

NEW YORK (AP) — Facebook founder and CEO Mark Zuckerberg has been named Time's "Person of the Year" for 2010, joining the ranks of winners that include heads of state and rock stars as the person the magazine believes most influenced events of the past year. At 26, Zuckerberg is the youngest "Person of the Year" since the first one chosen, Charles Lindbergh; he was 25 when he was named in 1927, Time said Wednesday. Zuckerberg beat out Britain's Queen Elizabeth II by just two weeks: She was 26 when she was named in 1952. Incidentally, Queen Elizabeth II has recently joined Zuckerberg's social networking behemoth. Time's "Person of the Year" is the person or thing that has most influenced the culture and the news during the past year for good or for ill. Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke received the honor last year. The 2008 winner was then-President-elect Barack Obama. The 2007 winner was Russian Prime

Minister Vladimir Putin. Other previous winners have included Bono, President George W. Bush, and Amazon.com CEO and founder Jeff Bezos. In naming Zuckerberg, Time cited him "for changing how we all live our lives." In a posting on his Facebook page, Zuckerberg said Wednesday that being named Time's "Person of the Year" was "a real honor and recognition of how our little team is building something that hundreds of millions of people want to use to make the world more open and connected. I'm happy to be a part of that." Zuckerberg has put himself on the map not only as one of the world's youngest billionaires, but also as a prominent newcomer to the world of philanthropy. Earlier this year, he pledged \$100 million over five years to the Newark, New Jersey, school system. Now, he's in the company of media titans Carl Icahn, Barry Diller and others who have joined Giving Pledge, an effort led by Microsoft founder Bill Gates and investor Warren Buffett



In this Nov. 15, 2010 file photo shows Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg smiling at an announcement in San Francisco. Another 17 of America's richest people, including Zuckerberg, junk bond pioneer Michael Milken and AOL co-founder Steve Case, have pledged to give away most of their wealth. They are the latest to join the Giving Pledge, an effort led by Microsoft founder Bill Gates and investor Warren Buffett to commit the country's wealthiest people to step up their charitable donations. Associated Press

to commit the country's wealthiest people to step up their charitable donations. Zuckerberg owns about a quarter of Facebook's shares. Zuckerberg has built Facebook into an international phenomenon by stretching the lines of social convention and embracing a new

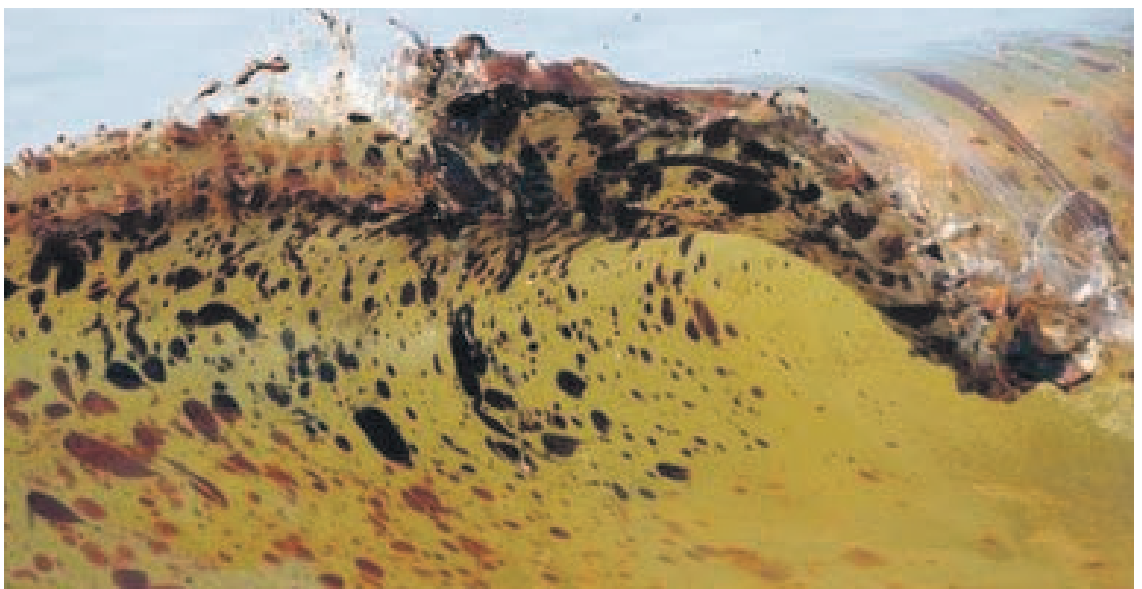
and far more permeable definition of community. In this new world, users are able to construct a social network well beyond what would ever be possible face-to-face. "I'm trying to make the world a more open place," Zuckerberg says in the "bio" line of his own Facebook page.

Born in Zuckerberg's Harvard dorm room, the site has in six years grown to more than 500 million users worldwide and a dollar worth in the billions. Facebook was the subject of director David Fincher and screenwriter Aaron Sorkin's film "The Social Network." It features a dark portrayal of Zuckerberg

Feds sue BP for oil spill damages

NEW ORLEANS — The Justice Department sued BP and several other companies involved in the Gulf oil spill Wednesday, an opening salvo in the government's effort to get billions of dollars for untold economic and environmental damage. The government accuses the companies of disregarding federal safety regulations in drilling the well that blew out April 20 and triggered a deadly explosion on the Deepwater Horizon rig. The lawsuit is separate from a Justice Department criminal probe that has not

resulted in any charges. "The department's focus on investigating this disaster and preventing future (spills) is not over," Attorney General Eric Holder said during a news conference in Washington. "Both our civil and criminal investigations are ongoing." The federal lawsuit filed in New Orleans names BP, rig owner Transocean and some other companies involved in the ill-fated drilling project, but not Halliburton — the project's cement contractor — or the maker of a key cutoff valve that failed. u



In this June 12, 2010, file photo, crude oil from the Deepwater Horizon oil spill washes ashore in Orange Beach, Ala. The Justice Department on Wednesday, Dec. 15, 2010, sued BP and eight other companies in the Gulf oil spill disaster in an effort to recover billions of dollars from the largest offshore spill in U.S. history.



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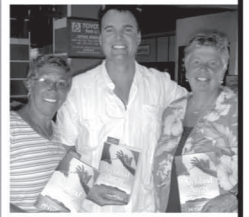
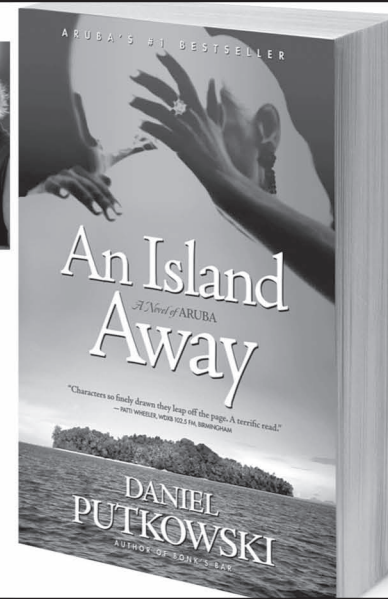
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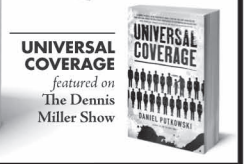
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Maine, NJ links case of New York beach bodies

BABYLON, N.Y. — The mother of a missing Maine woman last seen working as an escort in New York submitted a DNA sample Wednesday to authorities trying to determine the identities of four women whose bodies were found dumped on a deserted beach highway on Long Island. Meanwhile, the FBI offered its assistance with the investigation by Suffolk County authorities, who suspect they may be dealing with a serial killer. Authorities obtained the DNA sample from Lorraine Ela and will ship it to New York in an effort to determine whether one of the bodies found is that of the woman's daughter, said Robert Moulton, chief of the Scarborough, Maine, Police Department. Megan Waterman, who advertised her escort services on the online classifieds site Craigslist, was last seen in June at a Hauppauge, N.Y., hotel where she went with her boyfriend. The hotel is about 15 miles from where the bodies were found this week. "There's definitely a possibility, but we're on hold at this point," Moulton said of the suspicion that one of the victims is Waterman. Investigators are looking into the disappearance of both Waterman and a

24-year-old Jersey City, N.J., woman who was last seen on May 1. Shannon Gilbert was working as a prostitute, authorities said, when she disappeared not far from where the bodies were found. Suffolk County police discovered the first body on Saturday and the other three on Monday while following up on a missing-persons report for Gilbert. A Long Island resident recalled seeing the woman believed to be Gilbert briefly at his door around 4:45 a.m. May 1. "I heard screaming at my front door," said Gustav Coletti, who lives in Ocean Beach, about three miles from where the bodies were found. "She was saying, 'I need help, I need help, they're after me,'" Coletti told The Associated Press in a telephone interview. He told the woman he was calling the police, but she immediately turned around and fled, he said. A few moments later, a man in a sport-utility vehicle drove past the house and told Coletti he was looking for the woman. Coletti said the driver told him they had been at a party and the woman had become upset. "He took off after and I waited for the police," he said. That was the last he saw of either the driver or

woman, said Coletti, who could not offer details on the SUV or the man.

The four bodies were systematically dumped, perhaps over a period of 18 months or longer, along a desolate, windy stretch of highway east of Jones Beach State Park on Long Island's south shore, police said. Because the bodies were each just off the highway and within a quarter-mile of each other, police suspect the deaths are connected. "We're looking at that — that we could have a serial killer," Dormer told reporters Tuesday. "I don't think it's a coincidence that four bodies ended up in this area." Family members became worried about Waterman not hearing from her during a trip to New York in early June, her mother told the AP. Waterman always called three times a day to speak to her 4-year-old daughter, Liliana, but the last call came on the night of June 5, she said. When police searched the hotel room they found Waterman's clothing, makeup, cell phone and other belongings, Ela said. Liliana is now staying with Ela's mother in the Portland area. Police did not search along the Long Island highway,



Lorraine Ela, of South Portland, Maine, takes a swab from her cheek to provide a DNA sample to a detective, on Wednesday, Dec. 15, 2010, at her home in South Portland, Maine. Ela's daughter, Megan Waterman, 22, has been missing since June and authorities say they are trying to determine whether she is one four women's bodies found along a remote beach highway on New York's Long Island.

about 45 miles east of Manhattan, on Wednesday, but a spokeswoman said it was likely investigators would return there in the coming days. Detectives believe the four were killed elsewhere and then taken to the site, a narrow strip of land that divides the Great South Bay from the Atlantic Ocean. The four-lane parkway runs through the middle, connecting Jones Beach State Park with

several state- and town-run beaches to its east.



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Marines fly Santa Claus to Arizona reservation



SUPAI, Ariz. — Children on the Havasupai reservation don't associate Santa Claus with a sleigh and flying reindeer. They know he's coming when they hear the swooshing sounds of Marine helicopters overhead. Three Marine helicopters meandered through canyons to make sure Santa and his helpers reached even the most remote of places Wednesday — a small roadless reservation that sits deep in a gorge off the Grand Canyon and the only place in the country where mail is delivered by mule train. The helicopters landed on a small piece of land in the village of Supai. Tribal members emerged from their homes to greet Santa,

and children stretched their hands through the school yard fence, asking for one of Santa's elves to fashion balloons into animals, hats, candy canes and flowers. The event in its 15th year has become a holiday tradition for the tribe that hasn't always been able to count on much. The Toys for Tots program, a Utah couple and a local food bank work with the Marines to deliver donated baskets of goods to every family and toys to every child, with planning for the operation starting in April. The gifts were especially welcome this year while the tribe known for its towering blue-green waterfalls recovers from flooding that shut out tourists who

sustain the tribe's economy. Many of the tribal members work in the lodge and cafe or pack camping gear on the backs of mules. The reservation west of Grand Canyon National Park is accessible only by foot, mule or helicopter. While families do travel in and out of the canyon, it's usually limited to the weekends. Field trips are a rarity because of the cost to get out of the canyon, organized sports don't exist and community events are sporadic, school officials said. "To be consistent is the biggest thing," said Brad Buddinger, who teaches sixth, seventh and the school's two eighth graders. "This is one of the few permanent things that has been going on for a long time." For the Marines, the operation provides a unique training opportunity — flying in high and low altitudes, through narrow canyons and in extreme weather conditions. Francine Manakaja's children had been talking about Santa for at least a month and woke up early Wednesday because they

knew he was coming. "They're real excited about it," she said, surrounded by kitchen play sets, blankets and learning games given to her five children. Each child was called by name in the school cafeteria and was given a toy suited to their age and gender, and another bag filled with toiletries, a scarf, blanket and other goodies. Meanwhile, Santa's elves entertained the crowd with face painting

and balloon figures. Images of Santa were painted on kid's faces, colored on wall posters and decorating backyards. The jolly figure doesn't exist in tribal tradition, but the Havasupai recognize a season of giving and socializing, tribal members said. "There's no other Christmas," Tribal Council member Edmond Tilousi said. "This is the only Christmas we know."

In Pennsylvania

Record number of bald eagles counted

KEMPTON, Pa. — Bird-watchers at a ridgetop preserve in eastern Pennsylvania counted a record number of migrating bald eagles this fall, another sign of the species' remarkable comeback following a century of decline. The huge flight of 407 eagles smashed the old record of 245 set two years ago at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, which has kept an annual tally of migrating hawks, eagles and falcons since its founding 76 years

ago as the world's first refuge for birds of prey. As the autumn raptor count at Hawk Mountain drew to a close Wednesday, sanctuary biologists and birding enthusiasts alike cheered what Keith Bildstein, the sanctuary's director of conservation science, recently called "possibly the greatest wildlife success story of our time." The U.S. population of bald eagles suffered a steep decline between the 1870s and 1970s, first due to habitat destruction and hunting, and later because of the widespread use of DDT. The pesticide accumulated in fish, a major food source for eagles, and resulted in eagles laying eggs with weakened shells that broke during incubation. By 1963, there were only 417 breeding pairs left in the lower 48 states. They also were an extreme rarity at Hawk Mountain, which is situated along a major Appalachian flyway for migratory birds known as the Kittatinny Ridge. The low point came in 1975, when counters spotted only 13 bald eagles the entire fall.

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Halfway home: Senate sends tax-rate bill to House

WASHINGTON — In a reach across party lines, the Senate overwhelmingly passed sweeping legislation Wednesday to prevent a Jan. 1 income tax increase for millions and to renew jobless benefits for the long-term unemployed. A House vote is expected by Thursday. Within moments of the 81-19 Senate vote, President Barack Obama urged the House to follow suit without making any changes — a slap at rebellious liberals working to stiffen the terms of an estate tax provision they characterize as a giveaway to millionaires and billionaires. “I know there are different aspects of this plan to which members of Congress, on both sides of the aisle, object,” Obama said. “That’s the nature of compromise. But we worked hard to negotiate an agreement that’s a win for middle-class families and a win for our economy. And we can’t afford to let it fall victim to either delay or defeat.” At its core, the legislation provides a two-year extension of the tax cuts at all income levels that Congress approved while George W. Bush was president. Without action, they will expire on Dec. 31. The bill also would cut 2011 Social Security

taxes for all wage earners, a reduction that will mean an extra \$1,000 in take home pay for an individual earning \$50,000. In addition, the legislation renews a program of jobless benefits for millions who were laid off more than six months ago. Officials said that without the bill, government checks will be cut off for two million Americans over the holidays, and millions more over the next year. Energy tax provisions, including extension of a government subsidy for ethanol and breaks for producers of other alternatives to oil, were added in recent days to strengthen lawmakers’ support for the measure. The legislation amounted to the first fruits of a new era of divided government, a deal sealed little more than a week ago by Obama, who is nursing a fragile economic recovery midway through his term, and Republicans whose position was greatly strengthened in last month’s elections. Concessions made by the president sparked criticism from liberals who were angered at tax cuts for the wealthy that he had long criticized. Some provisions agreed to by Republican leaders brought objections from conservatives unhappy that the cost of the



US Senate Minority Leader Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-KY) speaks to the media on Capitol Hill December 14, 2010 in Washington, DC. Democrats in the House of Representatives were still mulling an attempt to toughen Obama’s tax bill’s inheritance provisions, defying Republican warnings that this could scuttle the overall deal.

jobless benefits would swell the federal budget deficit. And in the hours before final passage, lawmakers on both sides maneuvered for political gain, a sign of renewed struggle in 2011. A Democratic attempt to ease the paperwork burden imposed by this year’s big health care bill was blocked by Republicans. Democrats countered by vetoing a GOP alternative that would have included offsetting spending cuts. In the end, though, the tax bill drew support from 44 Democrats and 37 Republicans, testament to the appeal of lower taxes and renewal of a program

of aid for victims of the recession at a time of 9.8 percent unemployment. Fourteen Democrats and five Republicans voted against the bill. Obama’s call for the House to accept the Senate-passed measure continued a postelection season of contentiousness between the president and Democrats distressed that they lost their majority in November. Democratic House leaders said they intended to have the bill debated and voted on by Thursday, but declined to say what their approach would be to the estate tax. Their dilemma was evident — trying to keep faith with members of the rank and

file who want to change the legislation, yet avoid at all costs having Democrats saddled with blame if taxes increase on Jan. 1. That’s what the Senate Republican leader, Sen. Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, warned might happen if the bill was changed. “This agreement is not subject to being reopened,” he said on Tuesday. “In other words, we have an understanding.” However, McConnell’s insistence didn’t extend to a series of Republican attempts to make modifications in the moments before Senate passage.

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Bipolar Florida shooter had a turbulent past

PANAMA CITY, Fla. — The burly, bipolar man who held a Florida school board at gunpoint was frustrated and broke. He was a troubled ex-con with an interest in anarchy, and when his wife was fired from her teaching job and their benefits ran out, he went to the board meeting and said he was prepared to die. Clay Duke killed himself Tuesday after firing at the board members, missing them by mere inches, and exchanging a volley of gunfire with a security guard. A day later, his wife tearfully talked about the man she loved, calling the 56-year-old father a “gentle giant.” “The economy and the world just got the better of him,” Rebecca Duke said in a rambling press conference. In the moments prior to the shooting, Duke spray painted a circle and a large, red V inside of it on the meeting room wall and muttered about rising taxes and how his wife was fired from the school district. The school superintendent begged Duke not to shoot, but he did. A school board member crept up from behind and hit Duke with her purse — and Duke only called her a name, but didn’t shoot. Rebecca Duke said her husband was an excellent marksman who probably

intentionally missed the five board members who were sitting just steps away. “He didn’t want any one to get hurt but himself,” she said. No one but Duke was injured; a school security guard fired several shots and hit Duke three times in the back. In the end, Duke took his own life by shooting himself in the head. Police said the attack wasn’t some spur of the moment idea. At his mobile home in the woods, they found Dec. 14 circled on a calendar. And police said he had at least 25 more rounds of ammunition in his pocket. The entire shooting was captured by local television stations, and the video was posted on the Internet and broadcast on TV throughout the day. His Facebook page, which was public until late Wednesday afternoon, revealed a man who was fascinated with the movie “V for Vendetta” — which depicts the same symbol that Duke spray painted onto the wall just before he took out his gun. As board members gave television interviews about the harrowing experience, a sad and troubling portrait of Duke emerged. Born in Ocala, Fla., Duke graduated from high school in Tampa. Little is known about his early adult years

— family members claimed he was in the Air Force for eight years, but that could not be confirmed. In the mid-1990s, Duke had drifted to the Florida Panhandle — not the spring break-filled sugar sand beaches, but the remote and wooded inland. The ‘90s were a blur of court hearings and personal conflicts. He divorced a woman named Anita in 1995 and at some point, had a daughter. He was sued by a property management company in 1999. In 2000, he was convicted for waiting in the woods for ex-wife with a rifle, wearing a mask and a bulletproof vest. She confronted him and then tried to leave in a vehicle, and Duke shot the tires. His second wife, Rebecca, said the incident was a misunderstanding and that he went to his ex-wife’s house because the ex-wife “wouldn’t leave them alone.” Duke’s attorney on the case, Ben Bollinger, remembered Duke as especially paranoid about the new millennium. “He was one of these Y2k people,” he said, referring to a computer bug that some people thought was going to cause massive problems and economic chaos Jan. 1, 2000. “He was one of those believers that the world was going to turn for worst and he was stockpiling



In this image taken from video and released by WJHG-TV, Clay A. Duke points a hand gun at Bay City school board members and staff, Tuesday, Dec. 14, 2010. Duke, a 56-year-old ex-convict, calmly held the school board at gunpoint and said he was seeking redress for his wife’s firing before shooting at the superintendent at short range and then killing himself.

weapons, assault weapons.” Bollinger said Duke took a plea agreement: Five years in prison followed by 10-years probation. He sought psychiatric help and took his medications as ordered and completed his probation, his lawyer said. “He was competent but he was one of those people had a mood disorder where they could be depressed one day and all excited another day. I just remember the doctor saying he had a personality disorder,” Bollinger recalled. While in prison, Duke filed for bankruptcy. He was released in January 2004. About a year later, he sued the Social Security Administration, which had denied his application for disability benefits and health insurance.

“He couldn’t work. He just mentally couldn’t make the connection for eight hours a day,” said David Evans, the attorney who represented Duke. Evans said Duke had been diagnosed by several doctors as bipolar, but didn’t have enough money to buy the needed medication. “He was clearly in need of help,” Evans said. They filed at least five appeals to the denials. “The judges adjudicating the claims didn’t feel the claim was significant enough,” Evans said. “All he was asking for was \$500 or \$600 a month and medical insurance.” Duke withdrew the suit in 2006. He and Rebecca had married in 1999, just before his prison sentence.



Continental launches non-stops to Curacao from Newark

WILLEMSTAD, Curaçao -- Continental Airlines is launching twice-weekly nonstop service, on Wednesdays and Saturdays, from Newark Liberty International Airport (EWR) to Curaçao International Airport (CUR), on December 18, 2010. The new service makes Curaçao, the world's newest country as of October 10, 2010, more accessible to the Tri-State area than ever. Continental Flight CO1862 will depart Newark at 8:50 a.m. and arrive in Curaçao at 2:40 p.m. Continental Flight CO1863 will depart Curaçao at 3:40 p.m. and arrive in Newark at 7:40 p.m. "We are pleased to announce of the launch of Continental's year-round nonstop, twice weekly flights to Curaçao," said Curaçao Tourist Board Marketing Manager North America André Rojer. "The new Continental service brings huge potential for growth in arrivals to Curaçao from our primary markets of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut. We also expect increased arrivals on this route from Canada." Continental previously offered weekly, seasonal nonstop flights from Newark to Curaçao.

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Pictured are Joseph Cinque, President, AAHS; Ximena Navarrete, Miss Universe 2010; Ewald Biemans, Owner of Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort; Karen Dixon, International General Manager, AAHS.

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Cont. from page 7

All levels can play from beginner to Pro! It's going to be an active Beach Tennis event this Sunday at Eagle Beach!! Beach Tennis event Program: 9-11 am, Youth tournament (just show up). 11 am – 7 pm, Adult tournament (register online!) For actual standings of the tournaments of 2010, go to 'ranking' on the website below. For more info and/or register go to: www.arubabeachtennis.com or call 5926421. BTA is powered by:

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Hadicurari serves up fresh lobster

Ron Bell catches and eats a monster lobster



HADICURARI - On a busy Saturday at Hadicurari located on the fisherman's pier, Mr. Ron Bell brought in a monster lobster he caught by himself. He went fishing with the lucky star boat and left from the Oranjestad harbor for some professional deep sea fishing. He went bottom fishing

at a 150 feet deep level. "On a normal day, you can get a great catch with a trip like," says Ron, but instead he was surprised with a monster lobster.

He decided to bring his enormous catch to Hadicurari. The sous chef called Guide decided to prepare this 9 kilograms lobster in

lime butter and garlic. Ron and his friends Steve and Judy Boykin enjoyed eating for around one hour and had still an entire box filled with fresh prepared lobster to take with them.

These lovely guest from Martinsburg West Virginia enjoyed a delicious bottle of Unduragga TH Sauvignon Blanc private stock with their lobster.



More than just the best pizza on the island...

Casa Tua's highlight of the day: Ossobuco that melts in your mouth

PALM BEACH - Located on Palm Beach in the Arawak Gardens, Casa Tua presents a fresh under-the-stars approach to dining in Aruba. The outdoor atmosphere is cool and relaxed; the name says it all "Casa Tua" meaning "Your Home" in Italian.

The menu varies with a wide array of Italian dishes including a Sicilian-style thin crust pizza dripping with cheese, fresh-made tomato sauce and a variety of toppings in the meat, seafood and veggie categories.

TODAY'S HIGHLIGHT of the menu is the *Ossobuco di Vitello con Tagliatelle* which is a mouth watering Veal Ossobuco (shank) stewed with red wine, parsley, Rosemary, oregano, onions and lemon juice served with the most unique Tagliatelle. After the first bite, patrons are seen pinching themselves to see if they are dreaming or actually taking a true bite of seventh heaven.

The menu doesn't stop there as Casa Tua features incredible appetizers including shrimp



bruschetta, fresh marinated seafood, escargots, amazing salads, homemade soups starting at \$8 and authentic Italian lasagnas & pastas starting at just \$13. The staff at this popular eatery has set the standard on the island for the term "great service" not only with your dining pleasure, but recognized as 'the' professionals in assisting guests with the perfect cocktail, paired wine or other beverages.

After just one dinner at Casa Tua, you'll know your home in this family owned eatery. Of course we saved the best for last as no one does an ending better than Casa Tua with their dreamy Tiramisu, or Profiteroles au Chocolat Chaud.

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La Cabana Beach & Racquet Club Recognizes Excellence



EAGLE BEACH – The last award ceremony for the year 2010 recognized employees who went above and beyond the call of duty during September, October, November and December. The award ceremony was paired with delicious lunch, and included inspiring stories and anecdotes publicly praising award nominees and winners. The last period of the year was challenging, yet Bazile Baptistin proved himself worthy of the Associate of the Month title in September 2010, hailing from the Engineering Department. Rafael Brunal, won top honors for October, working for the Food & Beverage Department. A helpful well-known personality, Angel Santos, from the lobby Bell Services department, received the award for November, while a multiple time winner and the resort Carnival queen, from the PBX department, Alexandra Werleman, outshone all others in December. Her Supervisor Glenda Brokke, also from the PBX and a multiple award winner landed the Supervisor of the 3rd Tri-Annual period title, which naturally led to the decision to make the PBX team, Team of the 3rd Tri-Annual period. The award ceremony concluded with photo-opportunities, hugs and kisses, as La Cabana Beach & Racquet Club employees and members of management showed appreciation for a job well done.



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HUMAN HINTS

Release The Illusion Of Control

The concept of letting go is not new to the world of personal development. In these very pages, we talk about letting go of the result of your pursuits and releasing your desire. It is also important to let go of the idea that you have any semblance of control over your personal physical illusion. When we let go of the idea that we have any control, we surrender to the situation, we accept the next physical thing we must do. When we know we don't have control, we stop fighting what we're faced with, we stop resisting our lives. When we think we have control, we think we know better than our Expanded Self, who is writing and generating your own private full-immersion movie, exactly for you to experience a specific emotional journey. When we go with whatever life brings, we align with our Expanded Self and life begins to flow.

When we surrender our control, we stop fighting the Expanded Self, the creator of this holographic movie called physical life.

A Human is the actor. The actor can't and shouldn't be able to rewrite the movie. The actor agrees to play the role as it is written.

Realize what you cannot control, and go with it. When you flow with the current, you'll have the energy and momentum to navigate the temporary turbulence. Go to www.HumanHints.com to sign up to receive this column in your email each day. ~Quentin Danziger

Quentin has over 20 years experience balancing what we refer to as the Real World, with science and spirit. He has held positions of responsibility and authority, received a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Physics from Colorado School of Mines, and has studied many avenues of alternative thought. HumanHints is the culmination of his knowledge, experience and practice. These free daily emails detail concrete, real-world techniques to consciously create any future you chose, while in the throes of daily life created by outdated modes of thought.

Why Shanghai schooled the US: Americans think they're too smart to work hard

By Jonathan Zimmerman
New York – Are you smart? I mean, really smart? Like, so smart that you don't really have to work? Then you're kidding yourself. And your belief in your own intelligence is holding you back. That's the real story behind the latest piece of bad news in American education, which continues to stack up poorly next to other nations. On a standardized test administered to 15-year-olds in over 60 countries, the US came in 17th in reading, 23rd in science, and 31st in math. West loses edge to Asia in education: Top five OECD findings

Meanwhile, Asian countries clustered near the top. Students in Shanghai, China, nearly ran the table, scoring first in the world in all three tested subject areas – science, math, and reading. But Japan, South Korea, Singapore, and Hong Kong all outperformed America, as well, on all three tests. Hard work vs. intelligence Why? Politicians and pundits fingered the usual suspects: our schools. Whereas Asian countries demand rigor and hard work from their students, the theory goes, our own schools have gone soft. Witness the larger number of school days in most Asian countries, the stricter academic requirements, the greater volume of homework, and so on. There's something to that. Asian students do work harder, by every measure we can find. But there's more to it than that. Put simply, Asians believe that hard work is the prime determinant of their success. By contrast, Americans and other Westerners typically ascribe

academic performance to innate ability. And that's a fool's game. For the more we believe in "smarts," the less likely we are to persist in a task. If you're "good at" a subject like math, to borrow another favorite American phrase, then you don't really have to try; and if you're not good at it, there's no use in trying to get better. Are you smarter than a 12th-grader? A reading comprehension quiz. Consider a 2001 experiment by Canadian researchers, who administered creativity tests to Japanese and Canadian college students. Regardless of how the students performed, the researchers told some of them that they had done well and others that they did poorly. The researchers then gave the students a similar test and told them to spend as much time on it as they wished. The Canadians worked harder on the second test if they were told they had succeeded on the first one. They were "good at it," and that gave them the confidence to continue. Failing students were not "good at it," meanwhile, so they put in less work. But the Japanese worked longer on the second test if they had failed the first one! They interpreted their initial setback as a function of weak effort, not of ability, so they re-applied themselves to the task instead of blowing it off. Too much praise? Or consider a now-famous 1998 experiment by psychologists Claudia Mueller and Carol Dweck, who told American children they had done well on a test and then praised some for being smart, others for working hard. They then gave both sets of kids the chance to work on another

test – either easy or hard. About 66 percent of the children who were praised for their intelligence chose the easy problems, while 90 percent of the kids praised for hard work selected the more difficult ones. In subsequent exercises, the "smart" kids performed worse, and the "hard working" kids did better. The smart kids were also more likely to attribute their wrong answers to a lack of ability, while the kids praised for hard work blamed their own lack of effort when they failed. Are you smarter than an NFL quarterback? Take the quiz. The moral of these stories seems clear: If you want kids to succeed, don't talk about their intelligence. That will only hold them back. And it does. I've been a teacher for nearly 30 years, and I've seen students try to hide how much schoolwork they do. I mean, if they have to work that hard, how smart can they be? Americans like to say that their country is a land of opportunity; that anyone can make it, if they just try hard enough. But our educational system tells another story altogether. By emphasizing who is smart – and who is not – we teach our kids that their inborn capabilities are more important than their sweat and toil. Persistent achievement gap vexes education reformers: Six takeaways So why should we be surprised when the kids don't try? Sure, our schools should ask more of our students. But we also need to ask why they don't, and what role our flawed ideas about intelligence play in the answer. To paraphrase Shakespeare: the fault, dear Americans, lies not just in our schools. It's in ourselves.

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Iraq: Plot to bomb U.S., European countries revealed

LARA JAKES
QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA
Associated Press

BAGHDAD (AP) — Iraqi authorities have obtained confessions from captured insurgents who claim al-Qaida is planning suicide attacks in the United States and Europe during the Christmas season, two senior officials said Wednesday. A senior U.S. intelligence official confirmed the threat as credible. Iraqi Interior Minister Jawad al-Bolani told The Associated Press that the botched bombing in central Stockholm last weekend was among the alleged plots the insurgents revealed. Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshiyar Zebari, in a telephone interview from New York, called the claims “a critical threat.” Both al-Bolani and

Zebari said Iraq has informed Interpol of the alleged plots, and alerted authorities in the U.S. and European countries of the possible danger. Neither official specified which country or countries in Europe are alleged targets. There was no way to verify the insurgents’ claims. But Western counterterrorism officials generally are on high alert during the holiday season, especially since last year’s failed attack by Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, the so-called underwear bomber, who tried to blow up a Detroit-bound airliner on Christmas Day. Al-Bolani said several insurgents claimed to be part of a cell that took its orders directly from al-Qaida’s central leadership.

He said at least one of the captured suspects was a foreign fighter from Tunisia. The confessions were the result of recent operations by Iraqi security forces that have netted at least 73 suspected operatives in the last two weeks, al-Bolani said. An Iraqi intelligence official said threat information appeared to indicate that Denmark might be attacked, but refused to give details. Similarly, a senior U.S. intelligence official in Washington said authorities were closely watching two people in an unspecified European country suspected of being linked to the plot. The people did not appear to

be so-called homegrown terrorists, according to the U.S. official who would not say where they were believed to be from. Both officials spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitive nature of the ongoing investigation, and both refused to elaborate when pressed for details. Links between al-Qaida’s central leadership, which is believed to be hiding in Pakistan, and the terror organization’s front group in Iraq are tenuous as the Iraqi branch in recent years has been run by local insurgents. But al-Bolani said the claims — if true — show al-Qaida remains a presence in Iraq.



Iraq’s Interior Minister Jawad al-Bolani speaks to the press in Baghdad, Iraq, Thursday, Dec. 2, 2010. Al-Bolani called Thursday for the death penalty for a group of 39 al-Qaida-linked suspects even before they have been put on trial for allegedly plotting to bomb targets in Baghdad. Associated Press

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United Nations lifts key sanctions against Iraq

EDITH M. LEDERER

Associated Press



U.S. Vice President Joe Biden, right, greets Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshiyar Zebari, center, before a meeting of the United Nations Security Council, at U.N. headquarters, Wednesday, Dec. 15, 2010. At left is Hamid al-Bayati, Iraq's U.N. ambassador. Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The U.N. Security Council gave a unanimous vote of confidence Wednesday to the significant strides Iraq has taken by lifting 19-year-old sanctions on weapons and civilian nuclear power. The council also decided to return control of Iraq's oil and natural gas revenue to the government next summer and to settle all remaining claims over

the controversial oil-for-food program, which helped ordinary Iraqis cope with sanctions imposed after Saddam Hussein's army invaded Kuwait two decades ago. Although some sanctions will remain in place until Iraq and Kuwait settle outstanding issues from that war, Wednesday's vote was a major step to restore Iraq's international standing a year before the

U.S. is to pull its last troops out of the country. It came a day after a power-sharing agreement ended a lengthy deadlock on forming a new Iraqi government. U.S. Vice President Joe Biden, who presided over the meeting, told the council the move marked "an important milestone for the government of Iraq and people of Iraq in their ongoing effort to leave behind their troubled past and embrace a much brighter future." "The three resolutions we've passed bring an end to the burdensome remnants of the dark era of Saddam Hussein," he said. Biden's presence was a sign of the importance the Obama administration gave to the largely symbolic vote. The U.S. holds the Security Council presidency this month. Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshiyar Zebari said the adoption of the resolutions "marks the beginning of the end of the sanctions regime and restrictions on Iraq's sovereignty, independence and recovery." "Our key focus has been to unburden Iraq from the heavy legacy of non-compliance with international law and to break its isolation and regain its rightful place among the community of nations," he told the council. The council expressed confidence in Iraq's commitments to nonproliferation by lifting sanctions against acquiring weapons of mass destruction or pursuing a civilian nuclear power program. Iraq's constitution bars the country from acquiring weapons of mass destruction, and Baghdad is a party to most of the main nuclear,

chemical, biological and missile treaties. The council had said in February that it would lift the ban on Iraq's use of civilian nuclear power after it ratified several additional international treaties along with a protocol that allows the International Atomic Energy Agency to carry out unannounced inspections. Iraq has not done so, mainly because of the failure to form a new government. On Wednesday, the council urged Iraq to ratify the protocol and the nuclear test ban treaty "as soon as possible." It also asked for a progress report in 12 months. A second resolution, adopted unanimously, ends the international management of the Development Fund for Iraq on June 30, 2011. The fund was set up after Saddam's regime was toppled in 2003 to try to ensure that the proceeds of the country's gas and oil sales were used to help its people and restore its economy. The resolution, which will end Iraq's immunity from claims on the proceeds, calls on Iraq to set up a successor mechanism. The resolution ensures that 5 percent of oil and gas revenue will still go into a compensation fund, used mainly to pay Kuwaiti claims from the war, according to a U.S. official who was not authorized to speak publicly. The third resolution, terminating all remaining activities of the oil-for-food program, was adopted by a vote of 14-0 with France abstaining. France's U.N. Ambassador Gerard Araud said it "did not include all of the safeguards we thought was necessary for our support." The resolution authorizes U.N. Secretary-General

Ban Ki-moon to ensure that \$20 million from the account is retained in escrow until Dec. 31, 2016, for U.N. expenses related to ending the program, and another \$131 million to meet all other activities related to the fund including outstanding contracts. The council said the rest of the money in the program — which U.S. officials estimate at about \$650 million — should be transferred to the Development Fund for Iraq "as soon as possible." The oil-for-food program, which ran from 1996 to 2003, allowed Iraq to sell oil so long as most of the money went to buy humanitarian goods. It was aimed at easing Iraqi suffering under U.N. sanctions and was a lifeline for 90 percent of the country's population. But an 18-month U.N.-sanctioned investigation led by former Federal Reserve Chairman Paul Volcker found massive corruption in the program. Its final report in October 2005 accused more than 2,200 companies from some 40 countries of colluding with Saddam's regime to bilk \$1.8 billion. In May 2003, weeks after the U.S. invaded Iraq, the council lifted economic sanctions, opening the country to international trade and investment and allowing oil exports to resume. In June 2004, the council lifted an embargo on the sale of conventional weapons to the government. Iraq still has outstanding issues with Kuwait, including the major obstacle of demarcating their border as well as accounting for 600 missing Kuwaitis, returning missing property and archives, and the estimated \$22 billion Baghdad owes Kuwait as reparations for the invasion.



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1,000 detained in Russia to prevent ethnic clashes

DAVID NOWAK
Associated Press
MOSCOW (AP) —

Fearing more clashes between racist hooligans and mostly Muslim ethnic minorities, police detained more than 1,000 people in Moscow and several other Russian cities Wednesday, after weekend rioting in the capital left dozens injured. Hundreds of riot police outside the Kievsky station in central Moscow hauled into police vans mostly young men and teenagers who were shouting racist slogans and raising their hands in Nazi salutes. Some were lined up against buses and searched by police. Officers confiscated an arsenal of weapons, including traumatic guns, knives and metal bars, police spokesman Viktor Biryukov said. Police rounded up about 60 protesters in St. Petersburg, where radical groups also planned a gathering Wednesday. Riot police prevented clashes in Krasnodar and Rostov-on-Don, southern Russian cities with large non-Slavic populations where ethnic clashes have been frequent in recent years, officials said. Dozens of mostly young men have been detained in central Russia and Siberia, Russian news agencies reported. Resentment has been rising among Slavic Russians over the growing presence in Moscow and elsewhere of people from the southern Caucasus region, most of them Muslims. People from other parts of the former Soviet Union, including Central Asia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, also face ethnic discrimination and are frequent victims of hate crimes. While ethnic Russians amount to about four-fifths of Russia's population of 142 million, the country



Protesters raise their arms outside the Kievsky train station in Moscow on Wednesday, Dec. 15, 2010. Thousands of riot police deployed around central Moscow Wednesday to prevent possible ethnic clashes after the weekend rioting by racist hooligans fueled rumors that minorities could try to retaliate. Scuffles erupted outside Kievsky train station, which is popular with traders from the Caucasus, as hundreds of baton-wielding riot police in dark helmets rounded up some young men and teenagers shouting racist slogans.

Associated Press

is also home to some 180 ethnic groups. The Caucasus region with its mountainous terrain and isolated valleys is home to at least 100 ethnicities including Chechens, who waged two separatist wars against Moscow after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Analysts say it was the Chechen conflict, with atrocities and killings of civilians committed by both Russian federal forces and militant Islamists, that triggered the rise of xenophobia and neo-Nazism in Russia — and the growing resentment of Caucasus natives to ethnic Russians and Moscow's rule. Despite poverty and instability, the Caucasus region has Russia's highest birth rate, and tens of thousands of young people flee home for central Russia and Siberian

oil towns in search of jobs and a better future. The Kievsky train station, where most of the detentions took place, is popular with street merchants from the Caucasus. The majority of those detained were Slavic Russians, although some ethnic minorities from the Caucasus were also taken into custody. Police declined immediate comment on when those detained would be released or whether they would face charges. An expert on hate crimes predicted, however, that most of them would be released shortly. "Police will ride them around town and let them go; they won't find enough place for them in police stations," Alexander Verkhovsky of the Sova center told the Gazeta.ru online daily. Moscow mayor Sergei

Sobyanin said no injuries were reported. "Police will severely punish any provocations and violence," he said in televised remarks. Authorities sought to prevent the kind of rioting that took place outside the Kremlin on Saturday, when mainly soccer fans chanted "Russia for Russians!" during clashes in which dozens of people were injured. Many soccer fans are linked with neo-Nazis and other radical racist groups that mushroomed in Russia after the 1991 Soviet collapse. The violence over the weekend had raised new doubts about the government's ability to control the rising tide of xenophobia, which poses a serious threat to Russia's existence as a multiethnic state. It also embarrassed the Kremlin just days after

FIFA awarded the 2018 World Cup to Russia, and raised questions about Russia's ability to safely stage international sporting events, including the 2014 Winter Games in Sochi. The weekend rally began as a protest against the killing of a member of the Spartak Moscow soccer team's fan club, who was shot with rubber bullets during clashes with Caucasus natives at a bus stop earlier this month. Spartak fans claimed corrupt policemen detained one suspected killer following the fight, but released others because they had powerful backers in the Caucasus. Moscow police chief Vladimir Kolokoltsev acknowledged Monday that investigators had made a mistake and said three more suspects have been arrested. Russian media have been abuzz with rumors that some people from the Caucasus could try to take revenge for Saturday's riots, even as community leaders described the allegations as a provocation and called for calm. Anxieties about what would happen Wednesday were palpable hours before protesters starting gathering. A shopping mall just outside the train station shut down hours ahead of schedule, and most stands at a nearby flower market — operated mostly by people from the Caucasus — were closed. Authorities towed cars in anticipation of possible clashes and helmeted police were on standby on a square and around the mall early in the morning. A video in which anti-Caucasus slogans were interlaced with footage of ethnic minorities from southern Russia beating up policemen and Slavic men was posted on the website of the Spartak fan club Wednesday.

27 asylum seekers die as boat sinks off Australia



People clamber on the rocky shore on Christmas Island during a rescue attempt as a boat breaks up in the background Wednesday, Dec. 15, 2010. A wooden boat packed with dozens of asylum seekers smashed apart on cliff-side rocks in heavy seas off an Australian island Wednesday, sending some to their deaths in churning whitewater. Associated Press

KRISTEN GELINEAU TANALEE SMITH Associated Press SYDNEY (AP) — A storm off an Australian island Wednesday, flinging terrified occupants into churning waters and killing at least 27 people. Christmas Island residents on a cliff above watched

in horror as the boat — carrying about 70 people — broke apart with a crack, dumping screaming men, women and children into monstrous waves that pounded them against the rocks. “It was just horrible. People getting crushed. Bodies, dead children, the whole thing was pretty awful,” island resident Simon Prince told The Associated Press. Officials gave no immediate word on the nationality of the victims. The Customs and Border Protection Service said in a statement Wednesday that 27 bodies had been recovered from the water. Forty-one survivors were plucked from the seas, and one person made it to shore. “The rescue is being conducted in extremely difficult and dangerous

conditions,” the customs department said. “The search and rescue situation is ongoing.” Women and children were among the dead, Western Australia state Premier Colin Barnett said in a statement. The Royal Flying Doctor Service sent doctors to the island to treat 30 injured victims, said Joeley Pettit-Scott, the group’s spokeswoman. Three patients were critically injured, two men with head injuries and one woman with blunt abdominal trauma, she said. Acting Prime Minister Wayne Swan said the vessel was a people smuggler’s boat, but it was not clear where the passengers were from. Christmas Island is a remote Australian territory closer to Indonesia than

the Australian mainland and a frequent target of refugee hopefuls, who are housed in a detention center there. Australia is a prime destination for people from poor, often war-ravaged countries such as Afghanistan who want to start a new life. “This incident is a tragic reminder of the danger faced by people fleeing persecution and human rights violations in their home countries, and the desperate measures they will resort to in search of safety,” said Richard Towle, the United Nations Refugee Agency’s regional representative. Photos and videos taken by witnesses at the scene show the wooden boat crashing into the rocks and breaking apart. The images also show people floating in the water amid the wreckage. “

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SPORTS

Aruba TODAY

On Top Of The News Email: news@arubatoday.com Website: www.arubatoday.com Tel: 582-7800 Thursday, December 16, 2010

Goodell hopes labor can be settled by Super Bowl

By JAIME ARON
AP Pro Football Writer
FORT WORTH, Texas — NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell said a [new labor agreement](#) could be in place by the Super Bowl “if we all commit to it and work hard at it.” Goodell made it clear Wednesday that NFL negotiators are willing to do so. “There’s no higher priority than getting a collective bargaining agreement,” he said following a day of meetings with [NFL](#) team owners. “So we will work night and day to get that done.” Asked whether he expects the same from the NFL Players’ Association, Goodell said, “I hope so.” NFLPA spokesman [Carl Francis](#) said, “We have no comment at this time.” The major sticking point is the owners demanding to restructure the players’ share of designated revenues. Another point of contention is the owners wanting to turn two preseason games into regular-season games; the union fears more injuries and has countered with a request for additional roster spots and cutting offseason workouts by about one-third from the current 14 weeks. Goodell said the league has no deadline, but noted the collective bargaining agreement expires March 4.

Cont. on page 6



MELO MADNESS

Nuggets vanquish Magic 111-94

Denver Nuggets forward Carmelo Anthony (15) goes up for a dunk against the Orlando Magic during the second half of an NBA basketball game Tuesday, Dec. 14, 2010, in Denver. Associated Press
NBA Roundup on Page B5

UMinn pushes to be ready to host Vikes-Bears



Workers clear snow from TCF Bank Stadium at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, Wednesday, Dec. 15, 2010. The inflatable roof of the Metrodome collapsed Sunday after a snowstorm that dumped 17 inches on Minneapolis and will not be repaired in time for Monday night's game so the Minnesota Vikings will host the Chicago Bears at the TCF Stadium. Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — Backed by dump trucks and loaders, dozens of workers hoisting shovels and blowers attacked the snowdrifts covering the University of Minnesota's stadium Wednesday in a determined push to have it ready to replace the snow-damaged Metrodome for Monday night's game between the Vikings and Bears. As the work began in earnest, NFL officials toured TCF Bank Stadium to make sure it was safe for fans and meets other league requirements. The two biggest concerns, according to assistant university athletic director Scott Ellison, were whether all the snow can be removed in time and whether the frozen field could be softened to a level that won't hurt the players. "I'm completely confident

we can have a game here Monday night," Ellison said after crews had already removed 26 truckloads of snow and totally cleared 17 of the 52 seating sections. A fourth panel in the Metrodome's inflatable roof tore open at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, dumping snow and ice on the field, Metropolitan Sports Facilities Commission spokesman Pat Milan said. No one was hurt, and all the workers were pulled from the stadium floor. Crews will inspect the damage Thursday. Engineers from Birdair Inc., the Amherst, N.Y.-based manufacturer of the Metrodome's roof, discovered damage Tuesday that was worse than initially expected. The company gave the Metropolitan Sports Facilities Commission,

the owner of the dome, two options to repair the damage: Mending the torn panels, a short-term solution that would leave the panels still needing to be replaced, or replacing the panels with new material, a more long-term solution that would also be more time-consuming. Milan said cold temperatures were slowing repairs and that it could be three to seven days before a timeline emerges for using the Metrodome again. The question is largely moot for the Vikings, because the game against the Bears is the home finale and Minnesota won't make the playoffs. Ellison said the NFL was developing a plan to treat the college field with warming chemicals to soften it, and looking into laying a tarp that would have some type of heating element underneath. "We're confident. We're optimistic," Vikings owner Zygi Wilf said. "A lot of people are working very hard to get it done. But we want to assure the fans in the Twin Cities and all of Minnesota that we're going to have a game in Minnesota and celebrate our 50th anniversary, and (have) a dinner beforehand honoring the top 50 players. I look forward to being back outdoors the way I was always used to watching games and enjoying games." The NFL will make the final call on where the game will be played. NFL spokesman Greg Aiello told The Associated Press that "we support the plan to play the game at the University of Minnesota stadium and are assisting the Vikings and the university on preparations." Commissioner Roger Goodell said Wednesday he already was planning on attending the Bears-

Vikings game, and will keep those plans. "I think it will be a great experience for the fans, for the NFL," Goodell said. "It's something that we would rather not have happen. The fortunate thing is that nobody was hurt. But the safety of our facilities is important to us." The Vikings decided to hold the game at the home of the Golden Gophers after inspectors said there wasn't enough time to repair the dome's tattered and deflated roof. It fell early Sunday under the weight of about 17 inches of freshly fallen snow, forcing the Vikings to play the Giants in Detroit last Monday. University officials promised 16-hour days of plowing and shoveling — they asked for volunteers to work Thursday through Sunday — and were nervously eyeing a forecast that called for the possibility of another few inches of snow by Thursday night. Inside the stadium, workers shoveled snow onto long slides that snaked down the bleachers and poured it onto the field, where loaders scooped it into dump trucks. Ellison said the goal was to have the stadium game-ready by the end of the day Sunday. School officials, the Vikings and the NFL were negotiating many other logistical questions, from whether beer would be available at the normally dry stadium (undecided) to how a 50,000-seat stadium could accommodate Vikings' 54,000 season-ticket holders (unclear). The team said it was "working to accommodate fans' questions" but acknowledged it would take time to get the answers in such a "fluid situation." Ellison said the school

was looking into setting up more seats for the game — the Metrodome has a football seating capacity of about 63,000. Ellison said that owners of the Gophers stadium's 38 luxury suites would have first right to use them. The outdoor game will be a test for Minnesotans no longer accustomed to braving the frigid December air to watch pro football. The last outdoor Vikings game at Metropolitan Stadium in Bloomington, which the Metrodome replaced, was held on Dec. 20, 1981 — 29 years to the day before the Vikings-Bears matchup. Wolter said it was not clear how much it will cost to get TCF Bank Stadium ready for the game and then to host it. He said the Vikings vowed to cover the entire tab, and that the school has a budget of \$250,000 for each Gophers game. The total cost with all preparations could reach \$700,000 or more, he said. Workers at the campus stadium Wednesday were hired through temporary agencies, but as of Thursday the school planned to pay \$10 an hour to anyone who showed up outside the stadium willing to work. Quintin Spencer of Minneapolis was manning a shovel in the parking lot of the Gopher stadium, helping empty the trucks carrying snow from inside the stadium. The 43-year-old said he's been out of a steady job for several years and was happy to get paid for helping make a Vikings home game possible. "That's a real good thing," Spencer said. "I just hope they win, so that a part of this memory is that they won the game." Asked whether the collapse could help speed plans for a new stadium, Wilf said:

Five division leaders can clinch



Pittsburgh Steelers safety Troy Polamalu, right, celebrates with teammate James Harrison after intercepting a pass intended for Cincinnati Bengals receiver Terrel Owens (81) in the endzone during the fourth quarter of an NFL football game in Pittsburgh, Sunday, Dec 12, 2010. It was the second interception for Polamalu in a 23-7 Steelers win.
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Five division leaders can clinch playoff berths this weekend, and the Patriots and Steelers can secure first-round byes in the AFC. Pittsburgh and Jacksonville in the AFC, Atlanta, Chicago and the New York

Giants in the NFC all are in position to earn postseason spots. The Jaguars simply have to win at Indianapolis to take the AFC South. New England wins the AFC East and earns a bye if it wins at home against Green Bay and the Jets lose at Pittsburgh. The Patriots were the first team to clinch a playoff berth last week. The Steelers get the AFC North crown with a win and a Baltimore loss, and also can grab a bye if the Steelers have the strength of victory tiebreaker over the Ravens and Jaguars after this weekend's games. If Chicago wins Monday night at Minnesota and Green Bay loses, the Bears take the NFC North. Atlanta, which leads the NFC South by one game over New Orleans, makes the playoffs with a victory or a tie at Seattle. The Falcons get in even if they lose if the Giants fall to Philadelphia or tie, or the Bears lose or tie, or Green Bay loses or ties. For the Giants to qualify, they must beat the Eagles at the Meadowlands — the teams currently are tied atop the NFC East at 9-4 — and have Chicago,

Green Bay and Tampa Bay (home for Detroit) all lose, plus clinch the strength of victory component over the Buccaneers. Three division runners-up also have shots at securing playoff berths this weekend. The Saints do it with a win and losses or ties by the Giants and Bucs, or by the Bears and Bucs, or by the Packers and Bucs. They also get in with a tie and losses by the Bucs and Packers, or a tie and losses by the Bucs, Bears and Giants. Baltimore needs to win and have the Colts and Chargers (at home against San Francisco on Thursday night) lose or tie, or win and see the Colts and Dolphins (home for Buffalo) lose or tie while the Chiefs (at St. Louis) lose. A tie does it for the Ravens if Miami, San Diego and Indianapolis all lose. As for the Jets, a victory at Pittsburgh combined with a loss or tie by the Dolphins and Colts and a loss by the Chiefs get them into the postseason. They also qualify with a win and losses or ties by the Dolphins, Colts and Chargers, or with a tie and losses by Miami, Indianapolis and San Diego.

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Lee, Phillies finalize \$120 million, 5-year deal

PHILADELPHIA — Cliff Lee chose comfort and familiarity over more money. Welcome back to the City of Brotherly Love, Cliff. They already love you here. Lee and the Phillies finalized a \$120 million, five-year contract Wednesday that brings the star pitcher

back to Philadelphia. “It’s plenty of money,” Lee said. “When you hit a certain point, enough’s enough. It’s just a matter of where you’re comfortable, where you’re happy, where your family’s the most comfortable, what team gives you the best chance to win. At this point, it’s about trying to win championships. That’s really the No. 1 thing for me. I think this team gives me the best chance to do that. That’s really it.” Lee spurned more lucrative offers from the [New York Yankees](#) and Texas Rangers to return to the Phillies, who traded him away a year ago after he helped them reach the 2009 World Series. He could have had \$150 million and a spot on the biggest stage in baseball playing for the most successful team — the Yankees, winners of 27 World Series. Instead, Lee chose the red pinstripes over the famous dark blue ones and left \$30 million behind. “It feels great to land back here in Philadelphia,” Lee said at a news conference at [Citizens Bank Park](#). “I never wanted to leave this place in the first place.” The deal was reached late Monday night, and Lee arrived in Philadelphia late Tuesday. He had to flip-flop name plates with general manager Ruben Amaro Jr. when he sat down in the wrong seat at his news conference, and soon thereafter took off his dark blue suit jacket and put on his No. 33 jersey. The [two-time All-Star](#) and 2008 AL Cy Young Award winner helped the Rangers reach their first World Series this year. He chose to rejoin the Phillies and combine with Roy Halladay, Roy Oswalt and [Cole Hamels](#) to form a



Philadelphia Phillies pitcher Cliff Lee puts on a new hat during a baseball news conference, Wednesday, Dec. 15, 2010, in Philadelphia. Lee and the Phillies finalized a \$120 million, five-year contract that brings the star pitcher back to Philadelphia.

Associated Press

Hall of Famer Bob Feller dies



FILE - In this March 6, 2010, file photo, Hall of Fame pitcher Bob Feller waits to throw out a first pitch before a spring training baseball game between the Cincinnati Reds and Cleveland Indians, in Goodyear, Ariz.

Associated Press

By TOM WITHERS
AP Sports Writer
CLEVELAND — The Cleveland Indians say Hall of Fame [Bob Feller](#) has died. He was 92. Feller, the winningest pitcher in club history and one of baseball’s greatest right-handers, died at 9:15 p.m. Wednesday night of acute leukemia at a hospice where he had been moved in recent weeks, said Bob DiBiasio, the Indians vice president of public relations. Feller had been in failing health for months. He was diagnosed with leukemia this summer and underwent surgery to have a pacemaker installed. “Rapid Robert” won 266 games in 18 seasons for the Indians, q

dynamic starting rotation. “That was the main thing, getting a chance to be part of that rotation with this team and what they’ve kind of established in the NL East, being the leader there,” Lee said. It was kind of a no-brainer.” The 32-year-old Lee will earn a modest \$11 million salary next season. Including an option for 2016, the deal could be worth \$135 million for six seasons. Lee was 12-9 with a 3.18 ERA in 28 combined starts last season between the [Seattle Mariners](#) and Texas. He led the Rangers to their first postseason series victory with a pair of wins against Tampa Bay in the first round, and pitched a two-hitter against the Yankees in the ALCS. But Lee lost twice to the San Francisco Giants in the World Series. This is the fourth time Lee changes uniforms in the last 17 months. He was traded from Cleveland to Philadelphia to Seattle to Texas. He finally was able to pick his destination, and the Phillies were first in his heart all along.

“I never held any grudges for being traded,” Lee said. “From the day I got here, I knew it was something special. I didn’t know I would have an opportunity to come back.” Lee said the way Yankees fans treated his wife and the wives of his Rangers teammates during the postseason had no impact on his decision. He denied reports that someone had spit on or poured a drink on his wife, Kristen. “No one came up to my wife and spit on her. Nobody poured anything on her,” Lee said. “You go to any stadium, the opposing team stands and starts cheering, especially in the postseason, fans are going to say things to them, they’re going to do things, that’s part of it. That story was way overblown and was false and had zero to do with the whole thing. Hopefully we can put that behind us because it was a non-issue. “There wasn’t anything that scared me away from New York. I wasn’t scared to play there. It was just I wanted to have all my options in front

of me. Once the Phillies were there, it was relatively close to everything, it was a no-brainer for me.” The passionate fans in Philly, known for their sometimes boorish behavior, left a positive impression on Lee during his brief stint here in ‘09. “The intensity that you can feel when you get in the game, it has an elevated feel to it. Compared to everywhere else, it’s completely different,” Lee said. “I don’t know what the fans do to create that much more volume and excitement in the stadium, but it’s definitely something extra here. They get excited. They are passionate fans. They understand what’s going on. They don’t need a TelePrompter to tell them to get up and cheer.” A fourth-round selection by the Montreal Expos in the 2000 amateur draft, Lee is 102-61 in his major league career with a 3.85 ERA in 222 games. He’s 7-2 with a 2.13 ERA and three complete games in 10 postseason starts with 80 strikeouts in 76 innings.

NBA Roundup

Nuggets pull away late to beat Magic

DENVER (AP) — The Denver Nuggets pulled away in the final five minutes to beat the Orlando Magic 111-94 in the NBA on Tuesday, with Carmelo Anthony scoring 35 points. With Denver leading 92-91, Arron Afflalo's 3-pointer jump-started the Nuggets on a 19-3 run to close out the game. Anthony hit 14 of 21 shots from the floor and pulled down 11 rebounds. Nene had 10 points and 10 boards for the Nuggets, who improved to an NBA-best 11-1 at home. J.J. Redick scored a career-best 29 points for Orlando. **Lakers 103, Wizards 89** In Washington, Kobe Bryant took over the game by scoring 16 of his 24 points in the third quarter, lifting Los Angeles over undermanned Washington. Bryant scored 12 straight Lakers points during a 17-2 third-quarter run that put the game away. The Lakers won for the fifth time in six games. Bryant's hot streak came

shortly after a dubious NBA hat trick. Fouled while attempting a 3-pointer, he missed all three free throws. Andrew Bynum added seven points in his season debut for Los Angeles. **Pistons 103, Hawks 80** In Auburn Hills, Michigan, Detroit ended a four-game losing streak by beating Atlanta. Richard Hamilton scored 24 points and Charlie Villanueva added 23 points and 11 rebounds for Detroit, which blew a 25-point lead in a loss to Toronto on Saturday. Josh Smith led the Hawks with 26 points. Detroit dominated the first half, leading from the first possession on its way to a 49-37 halftime lead. Hamilton had 20 points in the first half as the Pistons held Atlanta to 34 percent shooting. **Bobcats 97, Raptors 91** In Charlotte, Tyrus Thomas hit the go-ahead jumper with just over a minute left, and Charlotte held on to down Toronto.

Nazr Mohammed had 18 points and eight rebounds for the Bobcats, who needed reserves to play key roles, as Stephen Jackson was held to seven points before fouling out. Thomas, in his return after missing two games with a sore calf, scored 14 points and his mid-range jumper with 1:20 left put Charlotte ahead to stay. The Raptors wilted from there in their fifth loss in six games despite 17 points and nine assists from Jerryd Bayless. **76ers 82, Nets 77** In Newark, New Jersey, Philadelphia snapped an eight-game road losing streak by beating slumping New Jersey. Spencer Hawes scored a season-high 18 points and Jrue Holiday had 19 points as the 76ers ended their longest losing streak away from home since 2006. Brook Lopez scored 16 points for the Nets, who lost their eighth straight overall and sixth straight to the 76ers.



Denver Nuggets forward Carmelo Anthony (15) goes up for a dunk against the Orlando Magic during the second half of an NBA basketball game Tuesday, Dec. 14, 2010, in Denver.

Associated Press

NJ's T. Williams traded

to Houston in 3-team deal

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — New Jersey has sent swingman Terrence Williams to Houston in a three-team trade that gives the Nets two more first-round draft picks for potential use in a Carmelo Anthony deal. The Nets got the Rockets' first-round draft pick in 2012, the Los Angeles Lakers' first-round pick in 2011 and shooting guard Sasha Vujacic from the Lakers. The Lakers get

veteran forward [Joe Smith](#) in the trade. "This trade benefits our team in both the short and long term," Nets general manager Billy King said Wednesday in announcing the trade. "Sasha is a veteran [NBA](#) player who will add depth to our backcourt rotation, while the addition of the two future No. 1 picks adds to our assets as we look to rebuild into a [championship contender](#)." In a second trade announced Wednesday, the Rockets

sent guard Jermaine Taylor and cash considerations to the Sacramento Kings for a conditional second-round pick in the 2011 draft. The Nets have five first-round picks through 2012. They own their own in 2011 and '12, got two more in the trade and have a 2011 pick from [Golden State](#) acquired in a trade for Marcus Williams. The Williams' pick is lottery protected. The Nets are interested in acquiring Anthony and were close to a deal in the preseason.

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Cont. from page 1



NFL commissioner Roger Goodell listens to a question during a news conference after the NFL football owners meeting in Fort Worth, Texas, Wednesday, Dec. 15, 2010.

"This becomes harder after the labor agreement expires," he said. "We want to get this done as soon as possible." At the league's fall meetings in October, Patriots owner Robert Kraft said he considered it realistic to have a new CBA by the end of the regular season, which is Jan. 2. Goodell said he doesn't think it is practical to expect negotiations to get serious enough fast enough for that to happen. However, he said, "I think the end of the postseason is realistic." Kraft left the meetings saying he didn't want to discuss the negotiations. "Just a lot of discussion. Nothing's changed. We're

still hopeful of getting an agreement at some point, but I don't have any substantive comment about where we are," New York Giants co-owner John Mara said. "I'm always optimistic until proven otherwise." Colts owner Jim Irsay said these negotiations felt like all the others he's been involved with over the last few decades. "There's nothing that's unusual or anything earth-shattering right now," he said. "The process continues is the best way to put it." Last week, the league agreed to give the union more time to file a collusion claim against the NFL. It was announced in a joint statement. "I have said this repeatedly: I believe this will be resolved at the collective bargaining table," Goodell said. "Obviously we're seeing a lot of rhetoric and different tactics, including litigation strategies that I think are all distractions and attempts to get leverage. I understand that. But at the end of the day, this will get solved at the negotiating table. That's where we should be." Goodell said it's a good sign that the league and the NFLPA are talking, but he called that only a start. "It takes productive dialogue, which means we've got to get to that place where we're making significant progress in getting an agreement," he said. "It's not just about meetings and dialogues. It's about getting real, significant progress on the key issues." The owners also watched a video on helmet hits and discussed reseeding for the playoffs. Owners have discussed before whether to

change the current system of rewarding division winners with a home playoff game, or if playoff seeds should be based strictly on record. It's an issue again because the winner of the NFC West could be 8-8 or 7-9, while a team with 10 or 11 wins could have to go on the road. "I see the merits of what they're talking about," Goodell said. "But I also believe that our playoff system has worked quite well. ... We were focused a lot on (whether) the priority should be win your division, get a home game. That's what clubs really felt should be the priority." The two clubs most likely hurt by the existing rules are the Giants and Eagles. They are tied for the NFC East lead at 9-4. Mara said he understands the logic behind the way things are done, "though I don't necessarily agree with it." "For me, a team that wins their division with a .500 record or worse shouldn't necessarily get a home game over a team that wins 10 or 11 games," Mara said. "I can't tell you I have a lot of hope about that passing. It's been discussed in the past and never gone anywhere." Eagles owner Jeffrey Lurie said he didn't have a stance. "It's a tough question," he said. "You keep having to go back and forth with that every year." The commissioner said a decision could be coming soon on the investigation in Brett Favre's possible improper conduct, and that another investigation is ongoing regarding a tampering charge between the Chiefs and Lions. Asked about a team moving to Los Angeles, Goodell said the CBA

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Ryan Lochte won't match Phelps with 8 golds

ANDREW DAMPF AP Sports Writer DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Michael Phelps can rest easy. Ryan Lochte is not going to match his eight golds this week. Lochte's golden bid was derailed when the United States relay squad failed to even finish on the podium on the opening night of the short-course world championships on Wednesday. Lochte enjoyed a dominant win in the 200-meter freestyle, but in the 400 free relay the U.S. fell behind after Nathan Adrian's dismal opening leg and Lochte had too much time to make up when he dived in for the anchor leg. Never one to take things too seriously, Lochte wasn't dwelling on the loss. "You win some and you lose some," he said. "As long as we're having fun out there, I guess that's all that matters." Adrian, however, was assuming responsibility after placing only seventh in the opening leg. "I had a bad swim," Adrian said. "There's really no reason I shouldn't have been faster. The other guys put together good splits and I didn't." Meanwhile, China set the first swimming world record of 2010, winning the women's 800 freestyle relay. While world records fell by the dozens in 2008 and 2009, no marks had been set this year after rubberized bodysuits were outlawed — and there still has been no individual mark set in either the long- or short-course pool. The quartet of Chen Qian, Tang Yi, Liu Jjing and Zhu Qianwei timed 7 minutes, 35.94 seconds, improving on the previous mark from the Netherlands two years

ago by nearly three seconds. Still, the biggest surprise was in the men's relay. The French team of Alain Bernard, Frederick Bousquet, Fabien Gilot and Yannick Agnel won in 3:04.78, with Russia a slim 0.04 behind and Cesar Cielo's Brazil third, 0.96 back. "A long time we are waiting for this victory, but you know when you believe in something you work hard for that and today it will pay," Bernard said. "It's maybe the first time for us on top of the international podium, but it's not the last — that's for sure." Normally the dominant force in relays, the U.S. team of Adrian, Garrett Weber-Gale, Richard Berens and Lochte placed fourth, a distant 1.32 behind. The U.S. men hadn't finished off the podium since they were disqualified at the 2007 long-course worlds due to a false start in morning heats. At the 2008 Beijing Olympics, Michael Phelps led off and Jason Lezak swam a memorable anchor leg against Bernard to secure a memorable win for the U.S. Phelps and Lezak were not here, and it was stunning to see Adrian, who upset Cielo in both the 50 and 100 free at the Pan Pacific championships in August, swim so slow. "I'm quite surprised. Actually, I'm almost disappointed," Bousquet said of the Americans' performance. "I wish they could have been in the fight, because it brings the intensity up, but I'm sure they'll be there for Shanghai." The next long-course worlds are scheduled for Shanghai in July. The U.S. women — Katie

Hoff, Dagny Knutson, Missy Franklin and Dana Volmer — also finished fourth in their relay. In other races, Olympic champion Liu Zige of China led for most of the way but slowed in the final lap and finished only fifth in the women's 200 butterfly, which was won by Mireia Belmonte Garcia of Spain in 2:03.59. Belmonte Garcia was back in the water later to win the grueling 400 individual medley in a championship record 4:24.21.



United States' gold medalist Ryan Lochte catches his breath after the Men's 200m freestyle final at the FINA Short Course Swimming World Championships in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, Wednesday, Dec. 15, 2010.

Associated Press

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Aruba TODAY

NASCAR's Johnson wins Driver of the Year



Jimmie Johnson accepts the award for champion driver during the NASCAR Sprint Cup auto racing awards ceremony at Wynn Las Vegas, Friday, Dec. 3, 2010, in Las Vegas.

Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Five-time defending NASCAR champion Jimmie Johnson has been named Driver of the Year. It's the fourth time Johnson has received the honor, tying him with Hendrick Motorsports teammate Jeff Gordon for most wins in the award's 44-year history. A panel of journalists and broadcasters from across the country vote for Driver of the Year, which is eligible to any driver from any series that competes on four wheels in the United States. Johnson received 10 votes to beat NHRA Funny Car Champion John Force. He received seven votes and NASCAR driver Kyle Busch received one.

Durant is USA Basketball male athlete of the year

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. – [Kevin Durant](#) has been chosen USA Basketball male athlete of the year after leading the U.S. to its first world championship in 16 years. Durant was the tournament MVP after averaging 22.8 points, a U.S. record in the event, while shooting nearly 56 percent from the field and 45 percent from the 3-point line. With the stars from the 2008 Olympic team staying home, Durant carried the young American team and is a lock to play in the 2012 Olympics no matter who decides to return. The NBA's leading scorer with Oklahoma City, Durant was at his best in the medal rounds. He scored 33 points



In this Jan. 24, 2010 file photo, Rafael Nadal of Spain serves to Ivo Karlovic of Croatia during their Men's singles fourth round match at the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne, Australia.

Associated Press

in the quarterfinals against Russia, 38 in the semifinals against Lithuania, and had 20 of his 28 in the first half of the gold-medal game against Turkey.

MLB union: End of drug case 'significant victory'



Former Major League Baseball pitcher Roger Clemens, center, accompanied by his lawyers, Michael Attanasio, left, and Rusty Hardin, arrives at court in Washington, Wednesday, Dec. 8, 2010, for an interim status conference on charges he lied to Congress when he denied taking steroids or other performance enhancing drugs.

Associated Press

NEW YORK – Following the end of a seven-year legal fight, the head of baseball's players' union hailed a ruling that federal agents illegally seized the test results and samples from what was supposed to be an anonymous 2003 survey. Union head [Michael Weiner](#) said in a statement Tuesday "this is a significant victory for our members." The 9th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals ruled in September that the seizure of a list of players who allegedly tested positive for steroids and corresponding urine samples was unlawful. The 90-day period expired Monday for the federal government to ask the Supreme Court to review that decision. The Justice Department had said Friday it would not contest the appellate ruling. "We are pleased that the government has decided not to pursue this case any further and to let this long legal battle end," Weiner said. "Players

were promised that these 2003 test results would be anonymous and confidential. We have always believed that the seizures were improper and violated the rights of the players and the [MLBPA](#)." Before the union could supervise the destruction of the test results and samples late in 2003, it became aware of the Bay Area Laboratory Co-Operative investigation. After months of fruitless negotiations, federal agents obtained search warrants and subpoenas for the records of 10 players and raided the offices of Quest Diagnostics and Comprehensive Drug Testing in April 2004. Led by then-IRS Special Agent Jeff Novitzky, they examined a spreadsheet containing the drug-testing records of all 104 baseball players alleged to have tested positive, mixed in on a computer with records from other sports and businesses. Agents

then obtained additional search warrants and seized the corresponding urine samples. Testing was part of baseball's effort to determine whether a stricter drug-testing policy was needed. Because 5 percent or more of the tests for steroids came back positive, it automatically triggered the start of testing with penalties in 2004. Three district courts ruled the seizures illegal. A three-judge panel of the 9th Circuit upheld the searches, but the larger panel voted 9-2 for the union in August 2009, then upheld its own decision this September in a revised opinion that removed guidelines for future searches from the majority opinion. While the case has been in the courts, the identities of six players alleged to be on the list became public: Jason Grimsley, [David Ortiz](#), Manny Ramirez, Alex Rodriguez, David Segui and Sammy Sosa.

Julian Assange back in court to fight for bail

LONDON – WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange was due back in British court Thursday to fight for bail following a week of legal drama which has seen prosecutors challenge a [judge's decision](#) to free him. Assange was granted a conditional release on 200,000 pounds (\$316,000) bail Tuesday, but prosecutors are trying to keep him behind bars and appealed the decision to London's High Court. Assange has already spent more than a week in prison following his surrender to British police over a Swedish sex-crimes warrant. He denies any wrongdoing but has refused to voluntarily surrender to [Sweden's](#) request to extradite him for questioning. Supporters of the 39-year-old Australian say the charges are



Ellingham Hall in Bungay, England, the home of journalist and Frontline Club founding member Vaughan Smith, is seen from the air, Wednesday Dec. 15, 2010. WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange will reportedly stay at the house, located in its 650-acre grounds, as part of his bail conditions if an appeal by Swedish authorities against bail fails in Britain's High Court. Associated Press

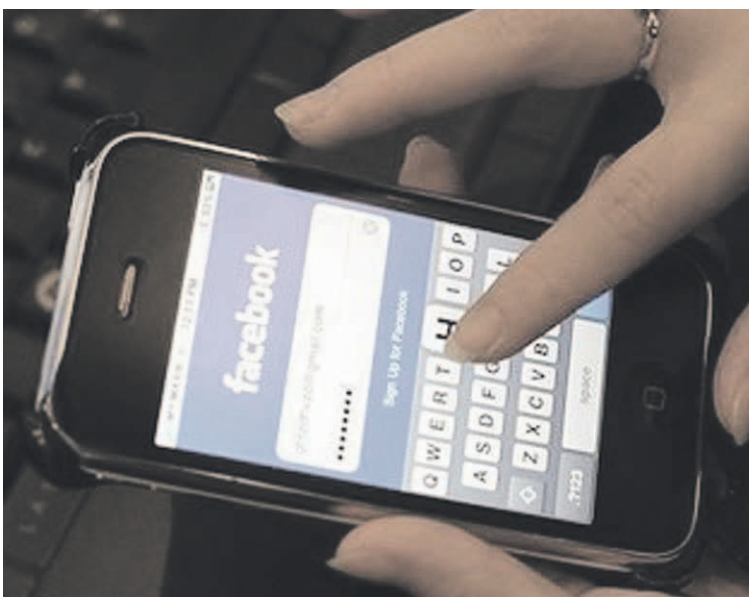
trumped up and possibly politically motivated. Assange's British lawyer, Mark Stephens, said Wednesday that "somebody has it in for Julian Assange and we only can conjecture why." But lawyer Gemma Lindfield, acting for Sweden, told Tuesday's hearing at the City of Westminster Magistrates' Court that Assange faced serious allegations and may abscond if granted bail. She said he is accused of rape, molestation and unlawful coercion by two women for separate incidents in August. Assange has yet to be charged. His lawyers say the allegations stem from a dispute over "consensual but unprotected sex" and argue that he has offered to make himself available for questioning via video

link or in [person in Britain](#). Lindfield also rejected attempts to link Assange's case with the work of WikiLeaks — which last month deeply angered U.S. officials by beginning to publish its trove of 250,000 secret U.S. diplomatic cables. "This is not a case about WikiLeaks, rather a case about alleged serious offenses against two women," Lindfield said. District Judge [Howard Riddle](#) approved bail on condition Assange wear an electronic tag, stay at a specific address in southern England, report to police every evening and observe two four-hour curfews each day besides putting up the bond. His lawyers are struggling to assemble the [bail money](#), which the court wants to see up front and in cash. Stephens said he had about half the amount by Wednesday.

Great Firewall no obstacle for China's Facebook game makers

by Joan Feng

SHANGHAI (AFP) — China's Internet censors may have kept most of the nation's 420 million web users from accessing Facebook, but they have not stopped social game developers like Ellison Gao. Five Minutes, a Shanghai-based studio co-founded by Gao, 27, launched its first social game two years ago and has attracted millions of dollars from investors, including US venture capital firm Draper Fisher Jurvetson. "It is impossible for any Chinese developer to ignore the Facebook market, just as it is for all the other social game firms across the globe," Gao told AFP at an industry forum last week.



A cell phone user checking her facebook. China's Internet censors may have kept most of the nation's 420 million web users from accessing Facebook, but they have not stopped social game developers like Ellison Gao.

More than a million users play his studio's games each day on Facebook, the firm's biggest market, although it

usually free to play, are one of Facebook's most popular features. Games such as Zynga's FarmVille, in which users interact as they manage virtual farms, have become global hits. Developers and social networking websites share revenue they generate from selling virtual goods and in-game advertising. Gao's firm is not the only Chinese company prospering on Facebook, which is blocked along with websites like YouTube and Twitter by China's vast system of Internet censorship, dubbed the "Great Firewall". Beijing-based studio Happy Elements has an average of more than 2.2 million

daily Facebook users while rival studio ELEX has about 1.3 million, according to tracking firm Inside Network. Chinese game studios are swarming to Facebook, which collects a 30 percent share of revenues -- terms developers say are more favourable than those of domestic sites -- and offers an open platform with over 500 million users. "It is not surprising that smaller companies are the ones taking the risks to develop for the Western market", said Andrew Mo, head of product management at the Beijing studio of London-based social network game maker Playfish.

After 25 years, King is giving up his CNN throne

By FRAZIER MOORE,
AP Television Write

NEW YORK — Early last June, CNN celebrated 25 years of “Larry King Live” with a week of shows whose A-list guests included President Barack Obama, LeBron James, Bill Gates and [Lady Gaga](#). It was hyped to the hilt and suitably eventful, even as King and Lady Gaga regarded each other with the bemusement of a human encountering an alien life form. Then, at the end of June, King suddenly announced he was retiring from his show — a weeknight fixture at 9 p.m. Eastern since June 1, 1985. He told viewers, “It’s time to hang up my nightly suspenders.” After Thursday’s edition, King will indeed hang it up, suspenders and all. The lineup for this farewell hour should be stellar, though no names have been announced. The mood should be spirited and flowing with emotion. But until now, it’s been an oddly subdued leave-taking. The promotion machine at a network can make noise over most anything. Or try. CNN isn’t bothering. Having paid King his tribute last June, before he even said he would be stepping down, CNN now is treating him as a lame-duck star, a chapter the network is rushing to move past. The focus is on [Piers Morgan](#), whom CNN named as the new guy in September. It is busily promoting his January debut. Morgan, a 45-year-old British journalist and TV personality known mainly in the U.S. as a judge on NBC’s “America’s Got Talent,” promises that “Piers



FILE - In this April 19, 2007 file photo supplied by CNN, Larry King interviews former President Bill Clinton, right, on CNN’s ‘Larry King Live,’ in New York. After 25 years of ‘Larry King Live,’ Larry King will hang up his suspenders with his last broadcast on Thursday, Dec. 16, 2010. (AP Photo/CNN, Jake A.Herrle)

Morgan Tonight” will be “exciting and slightly dangerous.” He is the future — or so CNN hopes. King, who has never been exciting or dangerous (nor tried to be), is clearly seen by CNN as yesterday’s news. Sure, it would be easy to argue that the 77-year-old King waited too long to hang up those suspenders. Once the leader in cable TV news, he now ranks third in his [time slot](#) behind Fox News Channel’s Sean Hannity and MSNBC’s Rachel Maddow. His show was seen by 700,000 viewers this year, less than half the nightly audience his peak year, 1998, when “[Larry King Live](#)” drew 1.64 million viewers. As recently as 2003, he was averaging 1.54 million. Wide-eyed and nonconfrontational, King’s regular-guy

approach to interviewing feels dated in an era of edgy, pushy or loaded questioning by other hosts. “I ask short questions, I have no pretense at intellectuality, I don’t pretend to know it all,” King said years ago in explaining his style. “Not, ‘What about Geneva or Cuba?’ I ask, ‘Mr. President, what don’t you like about this job?’ Or ‘What’s the biggest mistake you made?’ That’s fascinating.” Fascinating, until it seems sluggish or toothless or like automatic pilot. It has become easy for the viewer to lose patience with King’s accommodating, hunched-at-his-desk Q-and-A’s with his guests. As recently as last week, he landed [Wesley Snipes](#) for an interview just days before the actor began serving a three-year prison

sentence for failure to file income tax returns. But the ponderous interlude served mostly as a platform for Snipes to complain about his mistreatment at the hands of the media and the judicial system. King was ill-equipped to cut to the heart of the matter: How Snipes could have gotten himself into such a jam. King’s famous avoidance of over-preparation — he has always opted to approach each interviewee fresh, unburdened by too many facts — has begun to catch up with him in recent years. His occasional flubs have made him seem out of touch. Or worse. (A prime example from three years ago found King asking Jerry Seinfeld if he had voluntarily left his sitcom or been canceled by his network, which, as everybody else knows, had

been ready to hand him the keys to the treasury to stay. “I was the No. 1 show in television, Larry,” replied Seinfeld with a flabbergasted look. “Do you know who I am?”) At its start, “[Larry King Live](#)” was based in Washington, which gave the show an air of gravitas. King, too. He was the plainspoken go-between through whom Beltway bigwigs could reach their public, and they did, earning the show the reputation of a place where things happened, where news was made. Then in 1997 he moved to Los Angeles, which seemed a nod to show biz over substance — not to mention a more convenient routine for King. A man who once had hosted a nationwide radio program in the wee hours of the night, now he was done with “Larry King Live” at 7 p.m. local time. After Thursday’s show, he’s flat-out calling it a day. The points of light that form his dotted world-map backdrop will be dark. The end of “Larry King Live” is undeniably a cultural milestone, the end of a remarkable run. King, the suspenders-sporting everyman, is a pioneer in cable and a TV institution. He has estimated that he’s conducted 50,000 interviews during his half-century-long broadcasting career. Maybe so. And maybe he should have stopped a couple thousand earlier. But that doesn’t mean King (and his nightly suspenders and the safe space he created for his thousands of guests) won’t be missed after Thursday, when he’s gone.



US factory output increases for 5th straight month



In this Nov. 30, 2010 photo, a battery pack is shown prior to being installed in a Chevrolet Volt at the General Motors Hamtramck assembly plant in Hamtramck, Mich. U.S. factory output grew for the fifth straight month, adding to evidence that manufacturing remains an engine of economic growth.

(AP Photo/Paul Sancya)

WASHINGTON — U.S. factory output grew for the fifth straight month in November, adding to evidence that manufacturing remains an engine of economic growth. The Federal Reserve said Wednesday that output by the nation's factories, utilities and mines increased 0.4 percent last month, after falling 0.2 percent in October. Factories produced 0.3 percent more goods for consumers and businesses, after boosting output by the same amount a month

earlier. The strongest factory gains came from big-ticket items expected to last for several years. Separately, the Labor Department reported that inflation remained tame with consumer prices barely increasing in November. Small increases in food and energy costs pushed the Consumer Price Index up 0.1 percent. Excluding food and energy costs, [core consumer prices](#) rose 0.1 percent, the first increase in four months. In the past year, the core index rose 0.8

percent. That's slightly higher than October's 0.6 percent annual increase, which was the lowest since the index began in 1957. Low prices are attracting consumers to stores and helping boost the economy. Retail sales in November rose 0.8 percent — the fifth straight monthly gain. Consumer spending accounts for 70 percent of economic activity. Manufacturing is the largest single component of industrial production. It has been a bright spot through most of the

recovery. November's report confirms that the sector remains strong. Output by auto factories fell unexpectedly. Excluding [motor vehicles and parts](#), factory production jumped in October by 0.7 percent. All other categories of long-lasting durable goods posted increases. Business equipment, construction supplies and business supplies each grew 0.9 percent. More big-ticket consumer items rolled off assembly lines. Economists have worried that high

unemployment and a weak housing market would stifle demand for goods such as home electronics, appliances and furniture. November's gains in those areas could reassure them that a recovery in the consumer sector is under way. Production by utilities rose 1.9 percent last month, while mines produced 0.1 percent less. U.S. factories operated at 75.2 percent of their capacity in November, up from 74.9 percent in October.

Disagreement over EU debt crisis measures deepens

By GABRIELE STEINHAUSER,
AP Business Writer

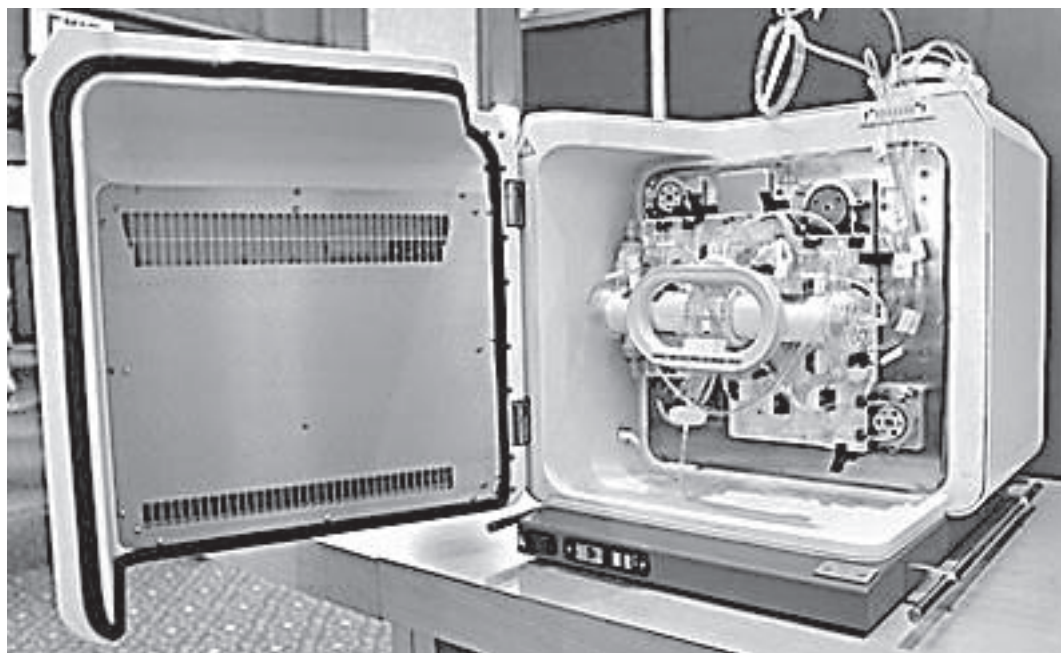


Jean Claude Trichet, President of the European Central Bank speaks during a press conference after the V High-Level Seminar of the Eurosystem and Latin American Central Banks in Madrid, Friday, Dec. 10, 2010.

(AP Photo/Daniel Ochoa de Olza)



A Cell Expansion System used to grow cell seen in Detroit in October 2010. A US cancer patient who received a stem cell transplant has been cured of HIV, said a team of German doctors whose research was published in the peer-reviewed journal Blood on Wednesday. Report: Transplant may have cured man of AIDS By MARILYNN MARCHIONE, AP Medical Writer A very unusual blood transplant appears to have cured an American man living in Berlin of infection with the AIDS virus, but doctors say the approach is not practical for wide use. The man, who is in his 40s, had a blood stem cell transplant in 2007 to treat leukemia. His donor not only was a good blood match but also had a [gene](#)



[mutation](#) that confers natural resistance to HIV. Now, three years later, the recipient shows no signs of leukemia or HIV infection, according to a report in the journal Blood. "It's an interesting proof-of-concept that with pretty extraordinary measures a patient could be cured

of [HIV](#)," but it is far too risky to become standard therapy even if matched donors could be found, said Dr. Michael Saag of the University of Alabama at Birmingham. He is past chairman of the HIV Medicine Association, an organization of doctors who specialize

in treating AIDS. Transplants of bone marrow — or, more commonly these days, of [blood stem cells](#) — are done to treat cancer, and their risks in healthy people is unknown. It involves destroying the person's native immune system with powerful drugs and radiation, then

replacing it with [donor cells](#) to grow a new immune system. Mortality from the procedure or its complications can be 5 percent or more, Saag said. "We can't really apply this particular approach to healthy individuals because the risk is just too high," especially when drugs can keep HIV in check in most cases, Saag said. Unless [someone with HIV](#) also had cancer, a transplant would not likely be considered, he said. When the Berlin man's case first surfaced two years ago, Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and [Infectious Diseases](#), said the procedure was too expensive and risky to be practical as a cure but that it might give more clues to using gene therapy or other methods to achieve the same result.

Gene Research Sheds Light on Lung Cancer Survival Time

Genes that predict length of survival and help guide treatment for patients with non-small cell lung cancer have been identified by [U.S. researchers](#). The investigators took samples of lung tumors and nearby healthy lung tissue from 30 patients and examined the samples for the presence of messenger ribonucleic acid (mRNA) associated with 48 known genes for molecules called nuclear hormone receptors. They then compared the active genes with patient outcomes and found that the expression of genes for certain nuclear hormone receptors helped

predict patient survival. According to the results, patients with two specific nuclear hormone receptors in their tumor tissue lived the longest. The two "biomarkers" were the short heterodimer partner and the [progesterone receptor](#). "Patient responses to cancer treatment vary widely and often depend on subtle biological differences among tumors," study co-lead author Dr. David Mangelsdorf, chairman of pharmacology at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, said in a facility news release.

States Now Fund Most Embryonic Stem Cell

Most of the [human embryonic stem cell research](#) conducted in the United States is funded by states, not the federal government, a new study reveals. The study also found substantial variation in the extent to which states prioritized human embryonic [stem cell research](#), and that much of the research performed in states could likely have been funded under federal government guidelines established in 2001. Study author Aaron Levine, an assistant professor at the Georgia Institute of Technology, created an online searchable database that offers

detailed information about stem cell research grants handed out by six states -- California, Connecticut, Illinois, Maryland, New Jersey and New York -- between December 2005 and December 2009. The database will be updated each year. "While the federal government still contributes more to stem cell research overall, each year since 2007, these six states have funded more human embryonic stem cell research than the federal government," Levine said in a Georgia Tech news release. "From what I could tell, only a relatively small portion of the stem cell research

supported by these states was clearly ineligible for federal funding," he added. The share of stem cell funding given for human embryonic stem cell research varied widely -- from 97 percent in Connecticut and 75 percent in California to only 21 percent in New Jersey and New York. Levine said this may be because some states, such as New York, are focusing on a new technology called induced [pluripotent stem cells](#), which are derived from adult body cells rather than embryos. The study was published in the Dec. 7 online edition of the journal Nature Biotechnology.

Florida scientists capture X-rays from lightning

LOS ANGELES — Researchers for the first time have captured X-ray images of lightning, a feat they hope will help them better predict how lightning behaves. A team from the Florida Institute of Technology and University of Florida launched small rockets into thunderclouds during the summer to trigger lightning. Using a special camera the size of a refrigerator, they recorded X-rays coming from the resulting light flashes before they hit the ground. Though the images are low-resolution, lead researcher Joseph Dwyer of [Florida Tech](#) said they give scientists a brand new way of looking at lightning — sort of what Superman would see. “Superman has X-ray vision,” he said Tuesday at the American Geophysical Union meeting in [San Francisco](#). Scientists have known that lightning emits X-rays, but they don’t fully understand it. Among the other unknowns are how lightning forms in the clouds, how it moves through the air and strikes objects on the ground, including people and buildings. Dwyer and his team performed the experiments at Camp Blanding in north Florida. The airspace overhead was controlled so scientists could trigger the lightning. They observed four separate lightning strikes and measured the X-rays and [gamma ray bursts](#). Though the flash they studied was human-made, Dwyer said it’s similar to the real type. The beauty of creating lightning is that scientists can repeat the experiment.

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Scientist says he found Japan fish thought extinct

By JAY ALABASTER,

Associated Press

TOKYO — A Japanese salmon species thought to be extinct for 70 years is alive and well in a lake near Mount Fuji, a science professor said Wednesday. The black kokanee, or “kunimasu” in Japanese, was thought to have died out in 1940, when a hydroelectric project made its native lake in northern Akita Prefecture more acidic. Before then, 100,000 eggs were reportedly transported to Lake Saiko but the species was still thought to have died off.

But Tetsuji Nakabo, a professor at [Kyoto University](#), said his team



In this undated photo released by Kyoto University via Kyodo News, a specimen of endangered Japanese salmon species is on display. A science professor says a Japanese salmon species thought to have gone extinct 70 years ago lives in a lake near Mount Fuji. (AP Photo)

of researchers found the species in Lake Saiko, about 310 miles (500 kilometers) south of the native lake.

“I was really surprised. This is a very interesting

fish — it’s a treasure. We have to protect it and not let it disappear again,” he said. He posed for pictures and

video with a specimen that was dark olive with

black spots on its back. The kunimasu grow to about a foot (30 centimeters) in length.

Nakabo said the lake had sufficient kunimasu for

the species to survive if the current environment is maintained, though he said in interviews he hoped fishermen would not catch it. Lake Saiko is in a region popular with tourists for its Fuji views and hot spring baths. The salmon is still listed as extinct in the public records of the Environment Ministry.

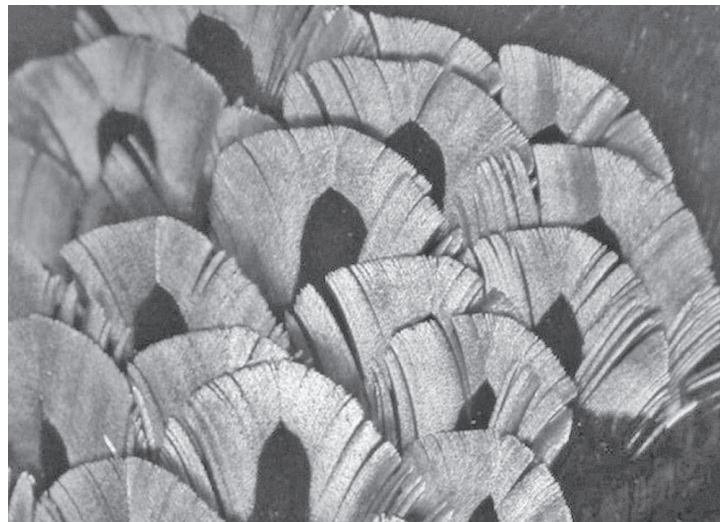
Yobukaze Naniwa, an official at the ministry, said Nakabo’s claim would be investigated before records are due to be updated in 2012. Other species, including shellfish and plants, have also been discovered in Japan after being declared extinct, Naniwa said.

From the front, the chest feathers of the Lawes’s parotia look yellow-orange.

Mirrorlike Feathers Give Bird of Paradise Its Shine [Stephanie Pappas](#)

The rainbow-sheened feathers of the male bird of paradise are an eye-catching way to snag a mate. Now, a new study finds the birds owe their shimmer to feathers that reflect light like mirrors. The Lawes’s parotia, a species of bird of paradise,

lives in Papua New Guinea. [Males attract females](#) with complex mating dances that consist of bobbing, bowing and gyrating. In the process, they shimmy their striking breast feathers, which look yellow-orange from the front, but shift to a shiny blue-green when viewed at an angle. The new study, published today in the journal



Proceedings of the [Royal Society B](#), finds that the feathers are able to shift so rapidly from yellow to blue and black because of the shape of microscopic structures called barbules. These tiny barbules line the barbs of a feather, just as the barbs line the main stem. If the main stem of a feather - the part that holds the ink in a quill - were a [tree trunk](#), the barbules would be the smallest branches. But by examining Lawes’s parotia feathers with both light and electron microscopes, University of Sussex professor of neuroscience Daniel Osorio and his colleagues found that the birds’ barbules aren’t cylindrical like tree branches. Instead, if you were to slice a barbule like a loaf of bread, the resulting cross-section would be shaped like a boomerang. That means the birds’ feathers are like three-way mirrors in a department store dressing room, the researchers wrote.

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Presidentes Correa y Santos dan por superada crisis bilateral

BOGOTÁ (AP) - Los presidentes de Ecuador Rafael Correa y de Colombia Juan Manuel Santos declararon el miércoles superada una de las más graves crisis de las relaciones bilaterales, detonada por un bombardeo militar colombiano a un campamento de las FARC al vecino país en el 2008.

“Yo creo que nunca hay que volver al pasado... siempre hay que ver hacia el futuro. Ese pasado, sin olvidarlo, quedó atrás. Ha sido superado”, dijo Correa en una conferencia de prensa conjunta con Santos en La Victoria, una localidad del suroeste colombiano.

A su turno Santos, que era el ministro de Defensa al momento del ataque militar en 2008, dijo que el bombardeo no fue “contra el pueblo ecuatoriano” y exhortó a dar vuelta a la página.

Los dos mandatarios, luciendo chalecos de socorristas por hallarse en medio de una zona aquejada por inundaciones y visiblemente alegres por su renovados lazos, mantuvieron un tono de cordialidad en sus declaraciones.



El presidente de Ecuador Rafael Correa, al centro, estrecha las manos de la canciller colombiana María Ángela Holguín, derecha, mientras el presidente de Colombia Juan Manuel Santos, izquierda, los ve en una ceremonia de bienvenida en el base aérea de Cali, Colombia, el miércoles 15 de diciembre del 2010. Correa realiza una visita oficial de un día a Colombia (AP Foto/Fernando Vergara)

Correa descartó que Ecuador pida visa de ingreso a los colombianos, como han propuesto sectores de su país. “Siempre serán bienvenidos a esa patria”, dijo Correa a los colombianos, lo que fue agradecido por Santos.

Correa anunció que el nuevo embajador de Colombia en Quito, Fernando Arboleda Ripoll, ya recibió el beneplácito de su gobierno. Santos dijo que medida

similar se produciría en breve para el embajador ecuatoriano designado el martes por Correa para Bogotá, el ex ministro de Educación Raúl Vallejo.

Dos días después del ataque militar colombiano, Correa denunció la violación del territorio y rompió relaciones diplomáticas con Colombia. Pero tras varias gestiones diplomáticas, a fines de 2009, Ecuador y Colombia

designaron encargados de negocios.

Y en agosto Correa asistió a la toma de posesión de Santos y ambos mantuvieron una breve reunión bilateral. Fue sólo hasta fines del mes pasado que los dos mandatarios, en una cumbre regional en Guyana, anunciaron que designarían embajadores, el último paso para la plena normalización de los lazos.

Más temprano, los presidentes recorrieron en un helicóptero zonas inundadas del norte del Valle del Cauca y más tarde pararon en un coliseo deportivo de la localidad de La Victoria, donde distribuyeron ayudas a damnificados.

“Dicen que los amigos se presentan en ‘las duras y en las maduras’ y aquí está el amigo presidente Rafael Correa haciendo acto de presencia, siendo solidario en este momento tan difícil”, dijo Santos desde La Victoria.

Los dos mandatarios entregaron cajas blancas con ayudas y que forman parte de una remesa de 7,5 toneladas de equipos que trajo Correa en un avión de la fuerza aérea ecuatoriana. Entre la ayuda entregada están raciones de comida en paquetes con arroz, café, azúcar, leche en polvo, harina de maíz, indicó en un comunicado la embajada de Ecuador en Bogotá.

La Victoria, un municipio al norte de Cali donde viven unas 15.000 personas que se dedican al cultivo de caña de azúcar, plátano y maíz, vio inundarse un sector del oeste de la población por la crecida del río Cauca, que provocó la ruptura de un dique.

Unas 1.200 personas están damnificadas, algunas de ellas albergadas temporalmente en una escuela, explicó en entrevista telefónica Humberto Poso, secretario de gobierno de la municipalidad.

Según el Ministerio del Interior, las lluvias de este año han sido las más intensas en décadas y han provocado la muerte de al menos 257 personas. En 2009 murieron 110 personas por las lluvias y en 2008, 48.

Moneda peruana opera estable ante preocupación zona euro

LIMA (Reuters) - La moneda peruana operaba estable el miércoles, debido a que las preocupaciones sobre la crisis de deuda en la zona euro frenaban una mayor apreciación durante el período de pago de impuestos en la plaza local.

A las 10.50 hora local (1550 GMT), el sol operaba sin cambios respecto al cierre previo a 2,817/2,818 unidades por dólar, con un monto negociado de 81 millones de dólares.

“El tema de la deuda española está dejando a las bolsas europeas en rojo, favoreciendo

el fortalecimiento del dólar a nivel internacional, lo que frena una mayor apreciación del sol”, dijo un agente de cambios.

Los mercados bursátiles operaban en baja debido a los temores a un posible recorte de la calificación de la deuda de España.

El operador explicó que “los dealers (bancos) locales conservan para sí la oferta de clientes locales (empresas) por el pago de impuestos y otros requerimientos estacionales”. En la plaza local, los pagos de impuestos se extienden hasta el 23 de diciembre. A

nivel externo, un alza en la actividad manufacturera en Estados Unidos impulsó al dólar frente al euro y el yen.

El índice dólar, que mide el rendimiento del billete verde contra una cesta de monedas de referencia, subía un 0,23 por ciento. El tipo de cambio informal se ubicaba en 2,818/2,822 soles por dólar. En las ventanillas de los bancos, la cotización era de 2,76/2,89 soles por dólar. La Superintendencia de Banca de Perú fijó para el cierre de la jornada anterior un tipo de cambio de 2,820/2,821 soles por dólar.

Brasil:

Ex embajador en Washington será canciller

BRASILIA (AP) - La presidenta electa Dilma Rousseff anunció el miércoles el nombramiento del diplomático Antonio Patriota, ex embajador de Brasil en Washington, como ministro de Relaciones Exteriores en su futuro gobierno. Un comunicado emitido por la oficina de prensa de Rousseff dio a conocer el nombramiento de Patriota, quien actualmente es el secretario general (viceministro) de la cancillería. Asimismo, informó que el actual ministro de Defensa, Nelson Jobim, continuará en su cargo cuando asuma el nuevo gobierno el 1 de enero.

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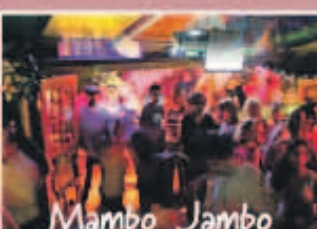
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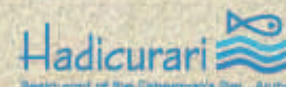
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